

tives of the architects, civil engineers, and the Town Planning Association unanimously agreed upon points on which the Town Planning Bill can be improved. One vitally important recommendation this conference makes is that there should be at the head of the movement a trained town planner, of world-wide knowledge. The departmental experts proposed by the Minister of Internal Affairs are all valuable, but experts take too exclusive a view as a rule, the sanitary engineer, for instance, being too much inclined to think that when good draining is provided for, the principal work has been done. Drainage is essential, but there are other essentials too, and the man of broad experience will know the varied requirements and use all the experts to perfect a good general scheme. We believe that the movement we have so long advocated is at last fairly under weigh, that it now has sufficient impetus to prevent a stoppage if difficulties are encountered.

Our Honoured Dead

In the lobby of Parliament Building, Wellington, may be seen a large slab of concrete which represents some official attempt to provide a standard type of head-stone to mark the grave of every New Zealander who has given up his life for the Allied cause during this war. It is a high and solemn duty, this marking the resting place of gallant men who faithfully and heroically did their duty even unto death, and we would have been glad, were it possible, to record that the official design suggests something appropriate to its purpose. But unfortunately it only raises a suggestion of a cheap and nasty job. In outline resembling a shortened fence paling of a type familiar to those who see timber-mill catalogues, this wretched creation of some ill-trained experimenter bears on its face, in relief, a concrete cross, within the angles of which appear the initials of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. Lower down, mounted on an inclined bevel of concrete, is a small tablet of marble, which is doubtless provided to bear the name of the soldier. The slab apparently is intended to lie on the ground, which would heighten the suggestion that its best use would be as a paving-stone. Very soon after its appearance, the little marble slab fell off its concrete bed, and this official experiment in head-stone design looked extremely untidy and shoddy.

Designs in New Zealand Marble

There is, however, some hope of better things. The Government requested the proprietors of New Zealand marble quarries to submit designs and prices. Obviously, where thousands of head-stones have, unfortunately, to be provided, nothing elaborate could be furnished, but we have seen some sample head-stones of New Zealand marble, about 3 feet 6 inches high by 2 feet in width, which meet the requirements of good taste in design and proportion, and bear no evidence of shoddiness. A polished cross

and the N.Z.E.F. initials appear in a panel of rubble, or as it is technically termed "sparrow-billed" surface. A small bronze tablet is provided below the panel for the soldier's name and other particulars. This type of headstone is immeasurably in advance of the concrete slab, for it looks well, will stand the climate for many years without serious deterioration in appearance, and has the sentimental advantage of being a New Zealand stone of which we are proud. We are also glad to be able to add that the cost of this very appropriate headstone will not be appreciably greater than the concrete slab. We suggest that the latter should at once be set up in some remote corner as a memorial to mis-applied effort. If the originator feels hurt over such a course being adopted, he should gain consolation from the knowledge that the monument would be unrecognisable as such in less than a generation!

Misapplied Material

Unfortunately the Government is not the only sinner in mis-applying concrete for memorial purposes. We have consistently advocated the widened use of this splendid and adaptable material, but never in our weirdest night-mares did we dream that it would offend us in this guise of soldiers' memorials. But in Southland district, the laudible desire to perpetuate the memory of fallen heroes has taken this most undesirable shape. A local undertaker was entrusted with the task of providing a suitable memorial, and he displayed the limitations which might be expected of the local undertaker. The contributors to the fund were given good value in the large mass of ornate concrete provided, but the general effect of the design was to make anyone with artistic perception feel sorry for the community which thus permitted its fine sentiments to be inadequately represented. There will be a general desire for soldiers' memorials throughout New Zealand, and we hope that these projects will not be hurriedly undertaken. It is a sad and solemn duty, and the memorial should suggest, in every line, its high purpose of reminding posterity that in these days we were proud of our heroes, and we mourned their loss. We appeal to the architectural profession to assert itself in this important matter of public good taste. The general public is always willing to be led by those who are qualified, and it is generally appreciative of sound advice. In the hope that something more appropriate than concrete in ornate mass can be put forward for local soldiers' memorials, "Progress" offers a prize for the best design, according to conditions appearing in another part of this issue. As there is a great public purpose to be served in this connection, we believe that the intrinsic value of the prize will be the least of the inducements to enter this competition. It is our intention to thoroughly follow up the subject, and endeavour to create a proper appreciation of good design and appropriate material for these memorials. If we can commence by demonstrating that there is no lack of artistic talent in New Zealand, our task will be comparatively easy.