

Australia. This exportation is causing a great shortage in the local market and has at the same time materially added to the cost of the smaller buildings. I am told that ships are leaving the West Coast loaded up with timber, while it is impossible to have our own needs supplied, and that millers do not seem to care about local orders, as they are doing so much better in supplying the Australian market. There is another aspect of this case which should not be lost sight of, and that is our timber supplies are not inexhaustible, moreover the available trees are getting far back into the hills (which means increased haulage), and no steps are being taken for reafforestation. I will not pursue this subject further as it will be brought forward for discussion during the evening.

Though we are still in the midst of the war and it is impossible to tell when the end will come, whether it may be soon, or long deferred, it is very necessary that we should look forward and place our house in order, that we may the better be enabled to meet the problems which will confront us when the long-looked-for peace comes. Some of these problems may be entirely new, and we shall have no precedent to guide us. How and when is the present Government control of building to be removed? Is it to be gradual, or will the coming of peace automatically put an end to it? How is the serious shortage of building materials to be dealt with, and how are soldiers to be repatriated? These and many other problems confront us and their solution will require careful consideration.

The question of building materials is one which concerns us very closely, and will I think be one fraught with great difficulties when the enormous damage, caused by the enemy, comes to be made good. So that the Belgians, French and others of our Allies may be repatriated an enormous quantity of materials will be required in these countries, and I am of opinion that in this far-off Dominion we may have difficulties in having our wants supplied. It would therefore appear that we, as a community, will have to become more self-reliant and proceed with the manufacture of our own necessities.

The repatriation of our soldiers is also a question which will require very careful consideration. A few days ago I saw in the newspapers that classes were now being held on our returning transports, and amongst the subjects taught was that of architecture. I am quite in accord with the scheme that the soldiers, who have done so much, should be given educational benefits as will give them every prospect of earning a living. I cannot see, however, that the time that is devoted to instruction on the transport (two hours per day for say fifty days) is sufficient to allow more than a very rudimentary knowledge of the subject to be given. If a soldier, on return to civil life, is to follow the architectural profession as a means of livelihood, we know that much more will be required of him than he can obtain in that time unless he has had previous training. I am afraid the authorities hold the opinion that all that is required of an architect is that he should be able to draw a few lines on a piece of paper. The sooner this idea

is dispelled the better it will be for the profession and the returning soldier.

I am of opinion that the time has now arrived where a committee or committees should be set up to consider these and other questions. If such committee or committees be appointed they should act in conjunction with representatives from the allied professions and trades, as these questions apply to all interested in the manufacture, use and importation of building materials and training of students and juniors.

When you did me the honour, an honour which I assure you I appreciate, of electing me for a second time to this chair, I made some good resolutions which I am afraid I have not been able to fulfil as I should have liked, but circumstances have in a large measure prevented this. Little did I think, when I again accepted office as chairman of this Branch, that the members of the Council of the Institute would see fit to place men in the highest office it is in their power to bestow. This honour, which I highly appreciate, carries with it numerous responsibilities and a large amount of work, more work probably than the ordinary members of the Institute are aware of, and this has to some extent prevented me from giving as much attention to the affairs of the Branch as I consider the office warrants. I have also to regret that the vice-chairman, through pressure of business, was unable to grant me relief under Branch Rule No. 3, a relief I would have gladly welcomed, as the demands of the presidency necessitate almost daily attention to matters of routine in addition to attending numerous meetings.

One of the first official duties was that of attending and presiding at the inaugural meetings of the two new Branches (Wanganui-Taranaki and Hawke's Bay-Gisborne) which were held in Wanganui and Napier respectively at the beginning of this year. As these two Branches are an offshoot of this Branch members may be glad to know that these two new bodies give every indication of success by the good work they are doing.

During the past session there has been very little business to bring before you, so that it has not been necessary to hold more than the number of meetings laid down by the regulations. Early in the year Mr. W. S. La Trobe, an hon. Fellow of the Institute, delivered before the members of the Branch a most instructive and interesting lecture on "Statics." I trust that Mr. La Trobe may be enabled to have his address published in pamphlet or book form, as I am sure his diagrams would be found most useful by members of the profession.

The attendance at Branch meetings generally has not been quite so good as the Branch officials have the right to expect, and in expressing my thanks to those members who have attended, often at personal inconvenience, I would like to ask those who stay away if they are taking a fair share of the work of the Institute. Matters which are dealt with by the Branch are for the good of the whole of the members, and while it is not possible for all to be actively engaged in the government of a Branch, it is expected that they will assist the committee by attend-