

N.Z. BUILDING PROGRESS

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A Journal for Progressive men interested in the development of New Zealand's
Architecture, Building, Engineering and Industries

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Editorial Comment

Building Trade Prospects.

Heavy drops in the freight rates from England and the United States seem to give some promise of improved conditions for the building trade, but hopeful as we are inclined to be of a revival, there are unfortunately other factors which off-set to an important degree the reduction in cost of transport. The labour upheaval in England will increase the cost of production, and probably result in maintaining the price of manufactures almost at the war level. It is anticipated that the landed cost of heavy ironwork will drop owing to the improved freight conditions, but other lines used in the building trade do not seem to be making the prompt decline which was hoped for when peace came. Wall plaster has actually advanced 5/- per ton since the armistice, and there is nothing very consoling, so far, about the prices of hardware. In reviewing the position of the New Zealand building trade at the opening of the past two years we ventured to advise owners not to wait for an uncertain drop in prices after the war, and we must repeat that advice to-day. It is unwise to postpone the erection of useful buildings in the hope of any substantial reduction in cost in the near future. New Zealand's labour situation is none too promising, but the rapid demobilisation of the Expeditionary Force will ease the severity of the shortage, and enable the most important building operations to proceed this year. Though it will be under difficulties, the building trade should enjoy a mild revival of activity this year.

War Memorials.

The adjudicators in the "Progress" competitions for war memorial designs report that nineteen competitors submitted designs, but they are disappointed at the lack of interest on the part of the more mature section of the architectural profession. Possibly our leading designers are awaiting the big national opportunities now in sight, for the question has become very prominent and the public is getting a good deal of advice of various kinds. The problem before New Zealand is the one which has concerned peoples from the beginning of history—how to fittingly commemorate an historical