

Education Department Architect.

Mr. J. T. MAIR, A.R.I.B.A., of Wellington, Appointed.

It gives us much pleasure to note that the Minister of Education, Mr. C. J. Parr, has appointed Mr. J. T. Mair, A.R.I.B.A., of Wellington as its architect. Mr. Mair's services were taken advantage of by the Defence Department in July 1918, to supervise the hospital buildings, and we feel sure the Government has done a good thing for the country in appointing him architect for the erection of school buildings. Previous to 1918 Mr. Mair was in private practice in Wellington, and some of his work has appeared from time to time in the pages of this journal—notably the fine brick church he designed for Invercargill.

Mr. Mair is a New Zealander, born in Invercargill, where he received his first architectural training. He was for several years on the staff of the Chief Engineer, N.Z. Railways, and in 1906, commenced a two years course of study at the University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A., where he gained a special certificate in architecture.

While in America, Mr. Mair was employed for some time as designer to the school architect, Richmond, Virginia, and later on the design staff of George B. Post and Sons, architects, New York, as assistant to Mr. G. B. Ford, the now celebrated American authority on housing and town planning. He later proceeded to London for examination by the R.I.B.A., and afterwards returned to New Zealand. He is a Fellow of the N.Z. Institute of Architects.

Soldiers' Timber Mill.

Some months ago 13 discharged soldiers from Hokitika, all with experience in the sawmilling industry, banded together, and, with advances from the Repatriation Department, purchased a sawmill and two sections of good bush at Inangahua. Although the bush is within 24 miles of Westport, the gap in the railway necessitates carting five miles to Inangahua, thence by rail 76 miles to Greymouth. Five directors govern the venture, which is run on a business basis, and with the economical methods adopted, the timber will cost 12s 6d per 100ft. The output is 6000ft daily.

"Commonsense Homes for New Zealanders."

Owing to an oversight in our recent publication, "Commonsense Homes for New Zealanders," the letters "F.R.I.B.A." were placed after Mr. Reginald Ford's name on page 14, instead of "F.N.Z.I.A." Mr. Ford writes us pointing out the error, and we wish it to be clearly understood that the error was made in our office. Our apologies are due to Mr. Ford for any inconvenience that may have been caused through this mistake.

New Hotel for Masterton.

For full ten years past it has been recognised that the one important element required to make Masterton the centre of gravitation that by nature it was designed to be was that of hotel accommodation. The closing of the licensed hotels by the will of the people left a gap that required to be filled, and visitors have continually remarked upon the failure of town and country residents to make provision for the proper accommodation of those who would be glad to make Masterton a holiday rendezvous and a resort for health.

It is of interest in this connection to know that a company has been formed and registered, known as the "Hotel Midland, Limited," having for its object the establishment in Masterton of an hotel that is worthy of this progressive town and district. The capital of the company is £20,000, divided into 20,000 shares of £1 each. A lease of the central and popular premises known as the Club Hotel has been secured for a period of ten years, with a right of renewal and a first refusal to purchase. It is proposed to convert this hotel into an up-to-date and luxuriously equipped hostelry, and to make it an institution which will be sought alike by travellers, country settlers, and those in search of a home away from the bustle and hustle of city life. The name of the hotel is to be the "Hotel Midland," and the aim of the company will be to conduct the institution in such a manner as will make it a not unworthy rival of institutions in various parts of the world bearing a similar title.

The company proposes to expend a sum of £5000 in transforming the building into a thoroughly modern hotel, possessing all the comforts and conveniences of up-to-date institutions. The interior is to be cleansed and renovated throughout. Wash-hand basins fitted with hot and cold water will be in the bedrooms, and the whole building will be brilliantly lighted with electricity. A wide, partially glassed-in balcony is to be erected, extending to the edge of the footpath, and running the full length of the building. This balcony, besides substantially improving the appearance of the hotel, will be convenient for afternoon teas, and will furnish extra accommodation for special occasions. The entrance to the building is also to be enlarged and made attractive.

A special feature of the renewed edifice will be the furnishings, upon which it is proposed to expend a sum of from £6000 to £7000. A reception room is to be specially furnished and decorated, and reserved for "at homes" and private parties. This should appeal to those ladies of the district who desire to entertain their friends in town.

The prospectus of the company has been issued, and already a most gratifying response has been received. Mr. G. W. Sellar, F.I.A.N.Z., is the secretary of the company, and from him the fullest particulars may be obtained.