

reconsider the matter of the actual allotment of buildings as between three, four, and five-roomed houses, and if council is now prepared to authorise the acceptance of a tender your committee would then be in a position to negotiate and finally settle the details, when the total sum of the proposed contract could be ascertained. When this information is to hand it will be possible to ask the Finance Committee to provide by way of a new special order for the total sum required under the scheme."

The report was taken in committee.

An amendment that the report be referred back to the committee for a further report was lost.

The motion that the report be adopted was then put and lost.

In answer to a question earlier in the evening the Mayor said that something would have to be done now with the tenders. He took it that the whole thing had been washed off.

It was then formally moved: "That no tenders be accepted."

The Auckland Competition.

New Arts Building.

The invitation to architects to submit competitive designs for the Auckland University College's new Arts buildings on the Metropolitan Grounds resulted in the receipt of 44 designs. From this number six have been selected; those responsible for them are being invited, in accordance with the resolution of the College Council, to forward final designs, from which one will be chosen as the winning design. When the competition was first announced it was suggested that the new building should be erected not more than fifteen feet back from the Princes street frontage. This, however, was only a suggestion, and not a direction. Some of those who submitted designs adopted the Princes street frontage, but a large number did not do so, their plans providing for the use of various other portions of the grounds. In connection with the final designs, this freedom of choice as to the position of the building has been made quite definite. An objection to this course was raised at a recent meeting by certain members of the council, who considered that if the building were placed elsewhere than on the Princes street frontage it would not have such a good aspect. Ultimately it was decided by three votes to two not to limit the position to the Princes street frontage. After the winning design has been selected it is proposed to hold an exhibition of all the designs submitted.

Our Competitions.

Details of our Architectural Competitions will be found on page 44. The results of our 66th Competition for a Workman's Cottage will be announced next month.

Approved Methods of Construction.

That concrete possesses qualities that make it pre-eminently suitable as a material for the construction of small houses and cottages is becoming ever more widely recognised. And as its use becomes more general, so will its limitations become known and its weaknesses be guarded against. Before the war concrete was only used tentatively as a cottage building material, and, as is inevitable under such circumstances, certain mistakes occurred, chiefly through lack of experience, which tended to bring the material into discredit, the effort in this direction being made either by those who were merely prejudiced against any form of novelty in building, or by those against whose interests it was that a new and competing material should assert itself. Thus disproportionate emphasis was given to the fact that in certain cases walls sweated, in others the houses were made uncomfortable by reverberation, and some were not entirely weather-proof. As experience in the use of concrete for the cottage grows so will these mistakes tend to become rarer, and even now it is possible to look ahead to the day when every builder and contractor, however small may be his business or limited his resources, will, nevertheless, be as accustomed to build in concrete as in brick or stone, and a faulty concrete dwelling will be no more frequent than a faulty building in these hitherto more familiar materials.

It has been almost possible to trace the growing confidence that is being felt in concrete by the continual concessions in its favour that are being made by the Ministry of Health. These have now received certain further extensions. The issue of "Housing" (the official publication of the Ministry of Health), London, of July 5th, contains a list of methods of construction which may be employed by persons desirous of obtaining the grant under the Housing (Additional Powers) Act, 1919. This list, which is additional to the various patent systems that are from time to time receiving approval, allows of certain reductions in the thickness of walls and allows cement tiles to be used as a roof covering. But with regard to the latter, the Standardisation Committee suggests that a local authority intending to use them should obtain a guarantee from the makers that the tiles will form a durable and strong roof covering—a very wise precaution.

Of the various special systems of construction that have been passed by the Standardisation Committee by far the largest number comprise some form of concrete construction. The loud but ephemeral outcry that took place in the London press in September and October of last year on behalf of the timber house has proved abortive. The reason is simple. Timber construction is not indigenous to the country. There are many examples of timber houses in various parts of England, but the total number is quite insignificant. Concrete, however, is entirely indigenous, and it is, therefore, but right that it should become a nationally recognised system