

of building, gradually establishing a tradition of workmanship and of design; moreover, it is a material particularly consistent with modern ideas of health, sanitation and prevention of fire risk. We feel perfectly convinced that the growing confidence which the Ministry of Health and local authorities generally are placing in concrete is entirely justified. As for the æsthetic aspect of the concrete house, many examples can be seen whose range has been extensive, both in style and in locality, and which contain amongst them sufficient charm to satisfy the most fastidious.

The First Garden City.

The first garden city of Letchworth is one of the greatest achievements of the present century, yet its place as a town development scheme in the political economy of the time is by no means as fully realised as it deserves to be. Even the town planner has not hitherto given Letchworth the attention that he should. It is easy to find fault with it. The town does not come up to many people's expectations. It is a common experience to find people disappointed with it on a first visit. Even those who care most for it find a difficulty at times in being patient over some mistakes that have been and are being made; but when all is said the town remains a community of the highest importance in relation to the future of England. Superficial observers, it is true, have sometimes overpraised it, and accounts of the town that have been published in England and abroad have frequently been misleading in their exaggeration. This kind of exaggeration is worse than any other. What can be truly said of the town is that it suggests great possibilities that have not yet been fulfilled. The existence of the First Garden City Ltd. in its relation to the town is itself a unique event of far-reaching importance; for the Company is the freeholder of the whole of the town land, and under its control and according to its plan the town is being built. The full meaning of this has by no means been realised, least of all by the Company, with the consequence that with the one exception of local option on the drink trade, none of the opportunities for social or economic experiment that are implicit within it have been explored. We do not think the time has passed for these opportunities to be made something of. The plan, the housing, the industrial equipment, the social institutions, the agricultural policy, the domestic arrangements of the town are all worthy of study. As a place of residence the town is of infinitely superior standing to any suburb; as a manufacturing centre it has proved its efficiency; and in every other aspect it shows what even a small amount of organisation may accomplish. It is of no advantage to attempt to show that in every detail of its development the town is a success; we do not think that to be of any consequence in an experimental scheme. It is sufficient that in its essential parts it stands the test of actual experience. Letchworth has proved that the garden

city principle of town development is sound. That was what it was established to do, and it has done it. It has done it so well that no one who takes the trouble to examine into the matter can fail to be convinced.—*Garden Cities and Town Planning Magazine.*

Road Construction in America.

It is interesting to note how the concrete road in America has developed alongside the increasing use of the motor-driven vehicle. This point is best illustrated by the following figures:—

At the close of the year 1909 there were six miles of concrete road in all the United States. At the end of 1919 there were over 11,000 miles of concrete road. During the same period the automobile traffic had increased from 127,731 cars to 8,000,000.

Motor cars demand a smooth rigid road. This was not the case when the horse was the motive power. Horse-drawn travel compacts dirt and gravel roads, while motor traffic disrupts these same roads. The cost of driving intricate and expensive motor vehicles is correspondingly more expensive on poor roads.

The farmer, who, in the United States, was at first strongly opposed to motor-driven vehicles, soon discovered they were valuable aids to him in his work, and thus the rural communities began to demand concrete roads, and farmers are consistent supporters of this type of road.

As is well known, the State of California builds her roads almost exclusively of concrete. In this State alone 2,500 miles of roads are made of concrete. In the case of the "Ridge Route," a Californian concrete highway, covering a stretch of 30 miles and costing about 1,200,000 dollars, it has been estimated that with the heavy traffic passing over this road the total cost of building would be absorbed in less than 200 days by the saving in gasoline, tyres and upkeep on the vehicles passing over it.

Memorial Entrance in Christchurch.

A plan of the memorial entrance it is proposed to erect at Lancaster Park, came before the Board of Control at a meeting held this month, from the architects, Messrs. J. S. and M. J. Guthrie. The plan provides for a handsome ferro-concrete structure, 100 feet in length, with a depth of twelve feet, and ten stiles, each fitted with collapsible iron gates. Provision is also made for an office, and, surmounting the whole structure, will be an appropriate inscription. The architects stated that the cost of the entrance would probably be from £1500 to £1600. It was decided that the secretary should write to the Government for permission to commence the work, and that the architects should be instructed to call for tenders.