

first floor landing is much too large and complicated in shape. With absorbent New Zealand bricks it is not good construction to make the footings of the wall of brickwork."

LESLIE D. COOMBS.

NOTE.—In view of the assessor's remarks regarding "Kope's" design we have had it traced so that it might be reproduced. As will be noticed, we have omitted the angle buttresses to which the assessor takes exception, and we have also dispensed with the batter on the lower portion of living room bay.

The printing on the drawing submitted in this competition generally strikes us for the most part as being very bad, and with a view to correcting this we hope shortly to announce a competition in which the lettering will form an important feature.—Editor.

## The Timber Broker.

Some Sidelights in His Methods of Business.

By H. HUGO.

What is a timber broker? We know that a timber merchant is a man who buys timber and sells it again, and that he is usually interested in or owns a sawmill,—in short his business is recognised as legitimate, and we all know of him. But what about the timber broker? Does he buy timber and sell it again? Do we all know him as a regular business trader in timber? Let me relate how I, as a comparatively young business man came to know about the timber broking business.

I was sitting in my office one day, when a telegraph messenger arrived. "Is this telegram for you, sir?" said he. I took the telegram and read the address:—

W. Brown,  
Timber Broker,  
Customs Street,  
Auckland.

"I suppose it is," I replied. "It has my initials and though I don't know what is meant by a timber broker, I expect somebody has been careless and intended it for timber merchant. However, I'll open it and see." So I opened it and read:—"Please supply 510,000 feet of rimu." It was signed by H. Jacobs, timber broker, Palmerston North. "Yes," I said, "this must be for me." But who was H. Jacobs, and why does he telegraph to me in Auckland for timber when there are so many nearer mills? We don't know each other in business, but he must be in a big way to order such a quantity of timber.

I therefore, went out to seek information as to who H. Jacobs might be, supposing him to be another timber merchant who had got some big order he could not execute, and was unable to obtain his timber at a nearer centre.

On my return, to my surprise, another telegram—this time from Wanganui—had been delivered to me for 240,000ft of matai, but bearing a different signature. This time it was C. Scott. Strange, thought I, that two orders of such a size should be delivered to me in one day, and from different towns too. I did not know of C. Scott in business either, and had failed to find out anything about H. Jacobs as a timber merchant or sawmiller in Palmerston North. So I went out again, wondering whether I was dreaming, to seek information regarding C. Scott of Wanganui.

On my way I met an old friend of my father in my own line of business, who was very fond of racing—horse racing in particular. He was a good friend of mine too, and as we had carried out frequent deals together, I knew I could trust him. I told him of the two telegrams I had received. He looked at them carefully, and with surprise said: "and you don't know either of the senders of the telegrams? I told him I did not. "Do you expect any more of them?" said he. "What do you mean?" I rejoined. "How long have you been a timber broker," said he, laughing. "You know perfectly well, I have been in the timber business as a merchant for over three years," I answered. "But that is not timber *broking*," said he, with a chuckle. I was getting quite annoyed at him. He seemed to be enjoying some joke, quietly, at my expense; so I said, "Sam, you have been my good friend for over 10 years, will you please explain what you are driving at?" He said with a smile, "You will receive a lot more orders before the day is out, but I can't explain now, I'm off to the races. Call and see me tonight, and bring with you the other orders you will receive before 3.0 p.m. You won't get any after that hour." With that he turned on his heel, and made for a passing tram bound for the course. More orders I am to receive! What on earth does the man mean? Is he playing some joke on me?

After lunch I returned to my office, and sure enough there were 14 further orders for varying quantities and kinds of timber. One order was for as much as 650,000 feet of kauri. Think of it, 650,000 feet of kauri. Why, there isn't that much Kauri in N.Z. at the present time. Surely the Telegraph Department had gone mad. But no, these telegrams were paid for, and had come from different towns. There is something very curious about this. People don't pay for the upkeep of the Telegraph Department for amusement.

After dinner that evening at about 7.30 p.m. I called on my friend, who greeted me with his annoying smile, which apparently, hadn't left him since I saw him earlier in the day. "Well, did you get the other telegrams? Have you made your fortune out of your telegraphed orders?" I managed to stifle my anxiety to hear what he had to tell me long enough to ask him how he had fared at the races. He answered, "only so-so. Come in and show me your orders." I gave him the bundle of telegrams, which he began carefully to scrutinize. "Let me see," said he, sorting out the wires into