

Our 71st Competition.

Six designs were submitted in this competition, viz.:—"Kauri," by Ernest R. Hutton (with Mr. Basil Hooper, A.R.I.B.A.), of Dunedin; "Amor," by R. Hall (care Government Architect's Office), Wellington; "Oak," by K. W. Hassell (with Mr. Wm. Fielding), of Wellington; "Kiwi," by W. A. Yates (with Messrs. Broadbent and Royds), of Invercargill; "Panikau," by Bernard Kennell (with Kennell Bros.), Gisborne; "Flight," by G. F. Wilson (with Messrs. Prouse and Gummer), Auckland.

Mr. Wm. M. Page, of Wellington, who kindly set this subject, reports as follows:—

"Six designs were submitted in this competition. It is disappointing that these competitions are not more largely taken advantage of, as they serve a most useful purpose and ought to be welcomed by every student in the country. I can think of no other reason for the small number of entries in these competitions than that the students as a body are not interested. I suggest that in those towns where there is an Architectural Students' Association the subject should be studied and worked out in the class. Where there is no Students' Association two or three of the students should work together to their mutual benefit.

"In the present competition there is, I regret to say, no difficulty in placing the designs. The design by 'Flight' is the only one that satisfies me as being appropriate. I therefore place it first. The proportions are good and the detail restrained and refined, and altogether the tablet is very satisfactory. The lettering, too, is excellent and based on a good example.

"Of the others that by 'Kauri' is the best, and I place it second. Carefully detailed it would be fairly satisfactory in execution, but the drawing hardly does it justice. It is rather unsympathetic and lacking in delicacy. Compare it with 'Flight's' drawing: the lettering is not so good either.

"'Amor's' design I disqualify, as there is no detail of the lettering. The panel, however, is quite good, only the enriched band should not impinge on the circular wreath at top of panel, but should run round on the half circle omitting the wreath altogether. The lettering of title on the drawing 'design by Amor' is exactly of the type that we wish to discourage. It is tawdry shopkeepers' price-ticket lettering.

"'Panikau's' design requires further study. Look up and study designs for monuments by Nicolas Stone in back numbers of the *Architectural Review*. The lettering and the drawing generally should be improved. 'Panikau' must avoid lettering on a curved line. It is never permissible in a rectangular panel, and is one of the signwriters' bad habits.

"'Oak's' design is very ordinary, but creditable for a beginner. The details and lettering require further study.

"'Kiwi's' design is of a type I do not care for, and gives no evidence of the study which it is the object of these competitions to encourage."

Structural Tiles.

A recent issue of the *Christchurch Press* published a description of a new invention in building by a New Zealander from its "Own Correspondent" in London. The writer says:—

Of the various constructional methods for housing schemes which have been placed before the Housing Department of the British Government, Mr. S. Hurst Seager (Christchurch), who is interesting himself in this matter, is of the opinion that the "McLeod System" holds second place only to the "waiver System."

Mr. W. McLeod, of Wanganui, brought his invention before the New Zealand Government some months ago. Since then, however, he has submitted it to various Government Departments in the United States, and has also brought it before the authorities in this country, with the result that it has been approved by the Ministry of Health.

Before leaving the Dominion he had a very comprehensive picture film taken of the process of building with the "structural tiles" he has invented, and recently Sir James Allen and Mr. Hurst Seager witnessed an exhibition of this film. For the construction of walls the system is undoubtedly an ingenious one. The "structural tile" units take the form of thin-sided hollow concrete blocks—one might describe them as concrete boxes, with no tops or bottoms. These units, which are very light and made in convenient sizes for handling, are placed in position in courses in the usual way, but no mortar is used. When the wall reaches a convenient height, say, five or six courses, concrete of a wet consistency is poured into the cavities and rodded, thus forming a monolithic wall. This procedure is repeated until the desired height is attained. Walls may be made of any necessary thickness, or a double wall may be built with an internal air space. Columns either round or square are easily formed. For curved walling and circular piers or columns the units are made with the required curve, and built up in the same manner.

The system is in effect one in which a monolithic wall is built without the use of removable shuttering, and the "structural tiles," in addition to providing the forms in which the concrete is held in position whilst setting, also forms the surface of the finished wall. If desired, reinforcement can be incorporated in the wall either horizontally by laying rods throughout the length of the wall in the cavities formed in the units for the purpose, or vertically by embedding rods in the cavity of the wall as the work proceeds.

Mr. McLeod maintains that beside all the obvious advantages of the system for mass production, walls of houses may be erected at a cost of 25 per cent. less than those built of bricks, and this is borne out by the report of a well-known firm of quantity surveyors. It is proposed to manufacture the tiles in factories equipped with machinery such as are already used for similar purposes in America, where machines are in use which are turn-