A HOUSE IN UPPER HUTT.

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Plans by the Dozen.

The “Plan Book” has now found a corner for itself in every bookshop. The increasing number and variety of these dreadful publications makes one realize the extent to which prospective house builders are groping in the dark for house plans and designs. In addition many periodicals now feature sections on house plans which are proving most popular. The Plan Book is aimed to provide plans for direct copying. Any draughting office or builder will make working drawings out of them. The legitimate architectural magazines, of course, have a different purpose—to stimulate the understanding of good design and to provide the means by which the architect can illustrate his work—but not for copying. In fact, the leading American magazines were known to redraw plans for publication, so that they were either unworkable or did not correspond with the photographs of the finished house. I have often checked plans and photographs and found discrepancies. After all, no architect wants his work lifted out of a magazine, though he likes the free publicity he gets. But the point is, of course, we all should know, that every house is a different problem and requires its own special solution—it requires the careful planning of a skilled architect. To pick a plan from a plan book will never give a satisfactory house—even if it's a plan book of architects’ work.

* * *

New Galleries.

HAVING SUFFERED a year or two with almost nowhere to hang an exhibition of paintings, Wellington has suddenly sprouted two new galleries, as I believe they are called. Both are private, and both undertake picture framing, which seems to be a profitable sideline. Mr. Hammerton on the Quay was the first to open, but Graeme Dowling was only a week or two later, but with coffee at 10.30 and tea at 3.15. Well, it’s a nice idea to drop in for a cup, even if there isn’t anywhere to sit. I wish both galleries success, and trust neither end up selling knicknackery.

* * *

Bottoms Up.

HAVE you ever looked underneath your telephone? I did the other day, not out of curiosity or because it fell on the floor, but because it happened for a moment to come to view, and I was struck by its good looks. I don’t think much of the rest of it—it is one of the new desk models with angles and an ungracefully body. It has been consciously moulded by an engineer without any feeling for form, and who must have tried deliberately to make it into a piece of design. Well he failed—he was an Australian I suppose, for I saw the letters Aye Pot on it somewhere. Anyway the bottom has also been designed by an engineer, but this time without any pretensions to conscious design and the result is certainly excellent.

* * *

Backsides In.

ARCHITECTS are all the same—at least the face-applying variety that seem to be almost solely responsible for our city facades. Often the only good-looking elevation an office building has is the one to the light well, or facing away from the street. Not that I would like to see these elevations on the street frontage, but they would be preferable by far to the mass of the coloured plaster and bronze that is applied to the fronts in the name of architecture. At least their backs are usually unpretentious and worked out in some relation to what goes on inside. Not always, of course. There are many exceptions, too many, including the plumber’s elevation, the plain wall covered with advertisements and the nononeksi. But when you consider that we see as much of the sides and back of a building as we do of its front, and that the sides and backs make up the vast bulk of our total city picture, then one wonders why architects seldom consider a building in its entirety, instead of in terms of plan, section and front elevation.

* * *

A Place to Remember.

IT IS worthwhile, if you have the time, to spend a few days in Russell. It is a beautiful little town which has been able to retain much of its original charm and historical interest. Many fine old houses and shops still stand, though some are in need of greater attention. Not only were the older buildings full of character, but some of the newer ones seem to have absorbed the spirit of the place and turned it to advantage. The town appears to have grown with the informal freedom of an English village, but at the same time expressing an organised community life. I will always remember the jetty with its grey structure and white railing contrasting so gaily with the holiday atmosphere of coloured boats and brightly dressed inhabitants.

How delightful it is, after miles of twisting roads, suddenly to come across such a place on a sunny summer afternoon. One could not help comparing Russell with the shores of some of our other and newer beach resorts.
BEDROOMS...

One of the manifestations of a New Zealand culture, as Mr. Westbrook has pointed out, is our weekend habit of tearing the insides out of our houses and doing them up with pinex and paint. Maybe you are in no position to display your talents to quite this extent, inhibited by unsympathetic landlords, landladies, parents, etc., but you need not be condemned to spend your private hours in an atmosphere of someone else's leftovers. You probably have at least a bedroom, a "room of one's own", which can be an exact and personal expression of your particular way of life with as little (or as much) trouble and cost as you like and as much (or as little) structural or other permanent alteration as you can get away with.

The first thing to think about is what you want to do in this bedroom. Well, you sleep and dress there. Just how you do even these elementary things is worth a bit of thought. A coal miner, a debutante, and a poverty-stricken poet each have different ideas on the processes of dressing, and no doubt their attitudes towards getting into bed differ also. Think about it.

It is quite likely that you work in your bedroom. Swot? Weekly accounts? Painting? Private practice? Short story writing? Model aeroplanes? Dressmaking? Music? Whatever it is, it probably takes up the greater part of the waking time you spend there, and you should work out just what provision you can best make for it. How much space? What sort of working surface? How much storage for what? How can you get the best light (both daylight and artificial)? The answers to these questions and to others like them will set the character of the room.

Probably people come up to see you there. Ten friends with beer? Three with gramophone records? Just one? So work out where you can seat them all, how you conveniently arrange the gramophone, how to show your etchings to best advantage, etc.

At this stage the process runs something like this:

1. What do you want to do in this bedroom?
2. What kinds of spaces therefore?
3. What useful objects are called for?
4. How can these be used to define the spaces?

For example: A young male painter living at home might need a divan bed capable of being sat on; a generous clear area for painting in, close to generous south-facing windows with curtains capable of controlling light; a work table with an absorbable top and racks below for storing paintings; shallow shelves for paints; plenty of bookshelves; a bit of room for dressing with provision for mirror, hair oils and things and a generous and convenient wardrobe.
Let us assume that this painter has a room like this

if he wants to spend as little money as possible he could do this

which could result in something like this

If on the other hand he is reasonably energetic and a bit of a handyman, he could take notice of the fact that there is a lot of waste space above the ceiling

and could use the whole of the present bedroom for studio and have a sleeping space on mezzanine floor

Your ideas for your own bedroom may be quite different. Why not work them out? There is more to replanning your room than shifting the bed and changing the curtains, but at the same time you don’t need to spend any more money than you can afford. Some points to consider are:

* Get some advice if you are going to shift any wall framing.

A bed takes up less space without ends and if it is built in low above the floor it is more use for sitting on, you don’t have to sweep under it, and it makes the room look larger.

8in. x 1in. dressed pine is great stuff for building almost anything with, especially all the shelving you want. It’s cheap, light and easy to work and fix. A good finish is raw linseed oil. If you want to paint it you’ll have to plane it by hand. If an immaculate finish on your furniture is important to you, you’ll probably have to pay for it.

Shallow shelves in a wardrobe are just as convenient for clothes as drawers, and a fraction of the cost and trouble. Curtains are an attractive, inexpensive and effective substitute for wardrobe doors.

Holland blinds are an abomination. They are drab and unsightly and of little use. Curtains can be chosen to give complete privacy at night and be attractive all the time. If you are worried about sunlight or privacy during the day, net curtains are the thing—you can see out but not in. If you are worried about sunlight fading the furnishings, consult a psychiatrist.

In a small room a set of little elegant chairs will take up more room than a divan and will look much more lonely when empty. And for that matter, when you are alone you can be really comfortable in a big padded armchair, and it can seat half-a-dozen at a party.

Remember that this is the room you live in and that you “did it up” yourself. It is the room you live in. It is not an exhibition of contemporary furniture and tasteful ornaments (or antique ditto for that matter). It is not the bedroom of Louis XIV, or Rita Hayworth, or Le Corbusier, or Mr. Westbrook. It’s not just a room. You live there. See what you can do with it.
MAN MADE NEW ZEALAND

Juliet Peter

We New Zealanders are accustomed to hearing of the beauties of our country's natural scenery. We are justly proud and appreciative of our country's natural scenery. We are justly proud and appreciative of our mountains, lakes and coastlines, and all the varied attractions the country has to offer us. If we are trampers, campers or motorists, we take every opportunity to leave the city and explore. Certainly there is much to delight us, but also much to regret. It would seem, on the whole, that the man-made scenery of New Zealand makes little attempt to live up to, or enhance, the original landscape provided by Nature. We take our natural scenery for granted, and remain unaware of eroded hillsides, burnt forests, gorse-choked valleys, and the shabby pretences of so much of our architecture.
Though these sketches were made in the vicinity of Ohakune, and depict the legacy of the earlier part of this century, they illustrate scenes familiar in many other parts of New Zealand. But now the old-style wooden box, with or without false front, is giving way to a rapid growth of jazz-trimmed concrete, which looks no more at ease, or in harmony with our countryside, than the other. Certainly there are exceptions, quite enough for us to be hopeful. But generally speaking, New Zealanders tolerate utilitarian ugliness as if it was a necessary circumstance of life.

The main trunk line to Auckland runs through country that once grew magnificent indigenous forests. Now utility pine trees and scrappy macrocarpus replace the fast disappearing bush. Sometimes a railway station is left stranded in a lonely bleak countryside, as if deposited there by a receding tide. The sawmills, still in pursuit of the bush, have moved far back into the hills.

In another locality the forest must have been burned while standing. It is now pasture land.

Sheep and cows do not seem oppressed by the desolation of such landscapes, but its brutalized aspect must ultimately have an effect on the human beings who live with it. A farm, however small, can be a delightful place when its paddocks are cared for and tidy, and its homestead placed in a setting of trees and garden. But too many, like this one, look unlovely and unloved. This can hardly be caused by poverty, as quite often a large new car stands in the garage. And the local township prospers as the spending power of the farmer increases.

The idea is slow in occurring that a more kind and considerate treatment of our environment might repay us, and add to our enjoyment of life. And the country might then look as if we belonged here.
ABOUT PLANNING

John Cox

This article is the first of a series of three.

"WHAT'S ALL THIS TALK about planning?" says Joe Doakes. He's just seen in the morning paper that the Borough Council is preparing a planning scheme for the development of the town for the next 30 years. "We've got along all right up to now without worrying about planning."

But wait a moment. That cup of tea he holds in his hand. What went into it? Water, yes, but that only needs automatic action—you simply turn on a tap. The tea? It came from the grocer; all that was needed was to open the packet and put it into the pot. The milk? That's quite easy, too; it comes right to the gate. So we got along without planning, did we? What was it but careful planning that directed the water from the stream to the reservoir and into the pipes in Joe Doakes' very kitchen? And how does he suppose the tea, grown in Ceylon, landed in his kitchen cupboard? Planning brought it there: the growers planned their crops; the shippers planned its transport; the importers planned its distribution. Again the milk: somewhere into the picture comes the cow but it requires careful planning and organisation to bring the milk to the box at the gate. Of course in the early days it was much simpler: the water was brought up in a bucket from the creek; the cow was milked in the paddock; and tea, well possibly there were some dandelions growing in the garden; they can be turned into tea. But would Joe Doakes like it? So we see evidence of planning even in that simple cup of tea. And the very fact that so much of our daily life has been simplified is in itself an evidence of planning, of thinking ahead. The planning in the past has been so unobtrusive and made so many of our functions almost automatic that that very fact makes Joe Doakes and his neighbours think they just happened. Its all very convenient. They simply switch on the wireless: they walk to the bus stop and catch their bus; they receive their letters on their desks. You don't worry about things like that: they just happen.

Joe Doakes doesn't like the sound of planning thirty years ahead. Somehow he feels it is an encroachment on his independence. He holds on to some romantic illusion about the good old days of rugged individualism. Vaguely he feels that people were freer then, more self-reliant. It is difficult for him to see things in their right perspective and to see that in reality there was no Swiss Family Robinson story of self-sufficient families making exciting daily discoveries of new foods and comforts plucked from an abundant nature. He does not see somehow that what each of those early families really aimed at was an organised and planned society; their self-sufficiency was uneasy. For the great majority of people, whether in town or country, the real problem was how to make a living. Until the advent of refrigeration, the life of the small holder was precarious. Markets for farm produce were very limited and for most people it was essential to find some other means of supplementing the income. The young urban settlements like Auckland and Wellington were founded on a faith that was only justified by subsequent inventions such as refrigeration. Apart from the few who, through possession of capital, or who due to the very nature of their occupations were secure, the early settlers had to be versatile to survive. Is it the kind of life these people lived that the Joe Doakes of our time are yearning for? Do they want to return to a precarious existence with no markets for their limited products? Would they reject electric power and lighting? Would they be content to cook on an open fire? Would they carry their water from the creek? Would they reject the motor vehicle and be content to go about on horseback? How would they farm? Would they milk by hand? Would they reject new grasses, new manures, new orchard trees? Would they refuse to read farm journals or to listen to the advice of experts?

We merely have to ask these questions to get the answers. Of course we do not wish to reject any of our technological advances. We would not return to the primitive living conditions of the past even if we could. No farmer, and particularly no farmer's wife, would for one moment consider giving up any of the conveniences of the present day. But when the dairy farmer throws over the switch to start the milking machine he must accept the whole electrical industry from the hydro-electric stations to his local power board. When he lifts the telephone receiver he accepts the whole post and telegraph system. When his wife turns on the radio she accepts the whole broadcasting system. When he takes the cream to the gate he accepts not only the cream carting system and the butter factory, but inevitably the whole planning of the dairy industry on a national scale.

There is hardly anyone who would be prepared to go without these and many other ser-
Services which have become a commonplace in our normal everyday lives. We would all agree that there is a vast amount of planning in every organisation responsible for each of the various services we enjoy. It is clear too that the kind of self-sufficient frontier farming life that we suspect Joe Doakes to be yearning for does not really exist. In fact the farmer himself has for the most part become a specialist today. He finds that he has as little time as the city man to tend his vegetable garden and his orchard. His wife is just as good a customer of the local store with its stocks of canned and fresh food as the townswoman. The farmer is, in fact, as dependent upon others as the townsman. Yet, like Mr. Doakes he tends to take it all for granted: the power supply, the roads, the motor car sales and service, the farm machinery repairs, the schools (including the school bus which picks up his children at the gate), the hospitals and medical service, the agricultural experts, scientific research into pastures and disease, entertainment— even the pictures and the races, for what they are worth—at which he is a passive observer. The list is endless. Even the marketing of his products is planned for him.

All this is very good because it does enable us to get on with our own specialised job. But we cannot afford to overlook the fact that this is made possible only through the regular functioning of an infinite variety of community services. It is the co-ordination and economic organisation of these various services that is the field of town and country planning, and it is the lack of overall organisation that is causing most of our troubles.

Let's just consider the problem from the householder's angle. His own individual home gives him great satisfaction. The house is pretty comfortable and convenient and the garden, so long as it is not too large, is a very pleasant hobby. But what about the journey back and forth to work each day in crowded trams or buses or trains? It is very unpleasant and a waste of time. No wonder he gets irritable. And now the fares are going up again. He darkly suspects mismanagement. But he sees the trams only in the morning and in the mad rush home at night. On the return trips at both hours the trams and buses are empty and for the rest of the day there is only a sprinkling of passengers either way. It is this dead mileage that puts the fares up. Can anything be done by the public transport organisation itself to remedy this? Not really. It is a matter for town planning.

And if in desperation he decides to use his car the situation is worse. There is one less passenger on the trams and one more car to wear out the roads (which he helps pay for) and to increase the congestion in the business area—that is if he can find a parking space near his work. But even if he does find a gap at the kerb-side near his business it is one place less for a customer to park. Actually he finds that by 9 a.m. when the doors open for business the kerbs are already fully occupied by cars and there are lorries double parked delivering cases and bundles over the cars and across the footpath into the front doors of the premises all around. Can he alone do anything about this? No he cannot. This is a matter for action by the local council through its planning powers.

Now let's consider his wife and a few of her problems. When the children are young she is tied to the home as are most of her neighbours. When she makes a few enquiries she finds that many people have only one child and have to stay home to mind it. Quite a number of these women are anxious to work at least part time at the profession for which they are trained. Some are qualified Karitane nurses and teachers. Couldn't we arrange this so that one person could look after a number of the children for at least some part of the day? It was this kind of arrangement that preceded the State primary school as we know it. The odd group or play centre can carry on for a while
but it really needs organisation and planning to be successful. The location of play centres and kindergartens in relation to existing and future population has to be considered even more carefully than the sites for the primary and secondary schools. The benefits can be largely nullified if parents have to take their children too far each day.

It would be very convenient if such centres were near the local shops, the library, the Plunket rooms, the tennis courts and the baths. But that kind of grouping doesn’t just happen of its own accord. It has to be planned in advance and it must be related precisely to future development. This means that if we as individuals wish to obtain these benefits we must look ahead. In other words we must accept control of development in accordance with a plan which provides for these things.

If we are not prepared to accept planning then we must not complain when we find that there is no vacant land on which to erect the community buildings we need, if there are no tennis courts or recreation grounds in our neighbourhood, if our children have to cross dangerous traffic roads to get to school, if we spend hours each day travelling to and from our work, if our city traffic is congested and there is no parking space. There can be no security of property values or of living conditions if we reject statutory planning powers. If our next door neighbour decides to erect a factory or to store wood and coal, or old car wrecks, or if he installs a circular saw or other noisy machinery and chooses to use it at all hours of the night, there is no way of stopping him except under the planning law.

If you still subscribe to the 19th century article of faith that if everyone is completely free to do what he likes with his own property somehow or other it will all come right in time—then don’t complain about the high price of vegetables. For if we want to have our vegetables and milk fresh and cheap then we must not permit urban development on the very limited areas of good farm land around our towns. Similarly, if you think that urban roads and services should be extended out in ribbons to anyone who chooses to cut his land up into town sections then, to be consistent you will pay your mounting bill for rates with a smile. For you will find that most of your rates go in interest on loans and in the annual cost of maintenance of roads, of the water and sewerage systems. We cannot have it both ways. Either we learn from experience and plan ahead so that we do not make the same mistakes again or we live by tooth and claw and take the consequences. Surely that is the most important difference between civilisation and barbarism?
CONTEMPORARY BRITISH LITHOGRAPHS

Stewart MacIennan

Colour Lithography is the vogue in England at the moment. "Colour" is probably the keyword there for lithography responds to colour more completely than any of the other graphic processes. The copper-plate renders line and tone; boxwood is supreme for black and white. The woodcut belongs to Japan. Western print-makers have, I think, made the mistake of adopting the Japanese technique. The humble linocut is the only process wherein the oil printing ink has been exploited. But where the linocut gives patches of flat colour, the litho stone or plate will yield as well chalk or brush marks in every conceivable gradation or texture. So responsive is the medium that its commercial value was soon recognised and it was used extensively for the making of colour reproductions, chromo lithos at first and now photo litho offsets. Daumier, Lautrec and later Nicholson and Fryde showed that lithography was an artistic medium in its own right. British railway companies realised the possibilities of the process for producing large decorative posters in bold flat colours. More recent London Underground posters have shown that lithography can capture all the little accidents that add to the personality of a design. Frequently now the designer draws directly on to the stone or plate from which the reproductions will be made.

Most of the graphic processes impose their own restrictions within which the artist is bound to work. Lithography, like painting, requires the artist to set the boundaries within which he will remain a contented prisoner. Herein lies the strength and the weakness of lithography—the almost infinite variety of treatments from which something truly graphic must be selected.

The Exhibition of Contemporary British Lithographs selected by Rex Nan Kivell of the Redfern Gallery and now on a New Zealand tour organised by the Nelson Suter Art Society, contains 37 colour prints. They are extremely interesting. The general effect is one of gaiety. The very first visitor to the Exhibition at the National Gallery burst into laughter—so spontaneously that I joined in. "What good fun," was his comment. Some later visitors were puzzled by some of the prints and some were annoyed. Some liked them very much. There's certainly nothing tame about the Collection and very few visitors remain indifferent.

There is nothing at all out of the ordinary in most of the subjects chosen. The catalogue lists such titles as "The Woodman", "Landscape", "Basket with Fruit", "Sideboard with Fruit", "Girl at the Piano", "Boy with Birdcage". But the subject matter nearly always forms the basis of a more or less abstract composition wherein the artist has invented his own shapes and textures. William Scott and Michael Ayrton adhere to traditional brush, pen and chalk and rely on sensitive draughtsmanship plus stimulating colour and design. Scott's "Portrait of a Girl" is a delightful print in all respects and Ayrton's two "Shepherd" pieces show complete mastery of the medium. Robert MacBryde, Robert Colquhoun and Julian Trevelyan are other painters who have found lithography a congenial outlet. This is, in fact, an exhibition by painter-lithographers. Graham Sutherland, Ceri Richards, Michael Rothenstein, John Minton, John Piper

"Portrait of a girl"

by William Scott
and Keith Vaughan are all there. Among the notably missing are Barnett Freedman, Edwin la Dell, Morris Kestelman and Henry Trivick, all of whom are known primarily as lithographers.

Looking critically at the Collection I found that the trick of transferring wood grain became rather tiresome. Such textures are intriguing if used sparingly, but with too frequent repetition they become dull. The source of the demand creates another danger. Lithographs appeal because of their colour. A public, not too discriminating, wants coloured pictures. Artists with little understanding of lithography can supply these via the lithographic process. A good printer can cope with practically anything handed to him on plate or transfer paper. Good lithographs may give way to elegant trifles or may degenerate into lithographic reproductions, and we come back to the chromo lithographs of Grandmother's day.

Note: William Scott's "Portrait of a Girl" and Robert Macbryde's "Woman at Table" are reproduced in the "Studio", September, 1950.

"Woman at Table" by Robert Macbryde
A HOUSE IN UPPER HUTT

A. L. Treadwell
This house, designed for Mr. D. J. Atkins in Upper Hutt, was intended to be the first stage of a building scheme for a family home.

While the family is just a young married couple the requirements remain simple. There is no need for elaborate living—no ritual of meals solemnly served or activities placed into compartments. There can be a free and easy way of life with both members of the family taking part. The easiness of the holiday bach in a permanent house was looked for, but with the finish and sophistication of a town dwelling.

It was decided that with a family of two, what was chiefly required was one space. Areas for cooking and sleeping need not be shut off with the finality of a closed door, but screened by cupboards and general arrangement of the plan.

Closed rooms were the bathroom, a storeroom (tennis gear, golf bags, cases, boxes, etc.) and a heating compartment.

The rectangular plan has the block of these closed rooms in the centre and the living area surrounds them on three sides. The bed is at one end, next to the bathroom, and the kitchen at the other.

The front door opens into the house alongside the wardrobe which screens the bed and which also serves as a coat cupboard.

The kitchen is screened by the centre block and its lack of "shutting off" is further justified by the wall which runs through the living room and kitchen. This is lined with beautiful figured rimu, clear stained, and uniting the two areas completely.

The kitchen itself is a line of bench with cupboards over, lit from above and with a "Compacta" washing machine at the end, next to the cooker. A fan takes away any fumes. The ceiling has been lined with "Perforatyle" acoustic tiles to deaden some of the clatter of kitchen noise and this adds to the decorative effect of the room besides giving added light reflection.
Windows down to the floor and up to the ceiling give an air of spaciousness to what is really a very small house. This apparent largeness was helped by lining the underside of the roof rafters instead of having a flat ceiling.

Construction and Finish.

The methods used in building were as far as possible time-saving and economical. This enabled a high standard of finish and materials. Better quality finishing materials, too, enables quicker erection and other compensating savings in cost.

The floor is concrete slab, quickly built, warm and silent and of sufficiently low cost to allow cork tiles to be used.

The walls are studs at 3ft. 0in. centres, lined on both sides with plywood; resin-bonded striated “Weldtex” externally and rimu inside. There are no window frames, or sashes as such—various studs are rebated to receive glass or adjustable louvres. The doors are hung in rebated studs, too.

The use of ply (an otherwise expensive material) has allowed certain savings. Only half the usual number of studs was necessary and it was possible to do without any skirtings, architraves, or cornices. The stud frames themselves were factory made and taken out to the job in eight sections. The builders then fitted them over the holding down bolts in the concrete floor and lined them.

Walls and ceilings were insulated with “Insulwool”. This measure, besides saving fuel bills has a noise deadening effect and the sound of rain on the roof is hardly heard. As for heating, on a normal day the warmth of the sun enters the windows and when the curtains are drawn this warmth is trapped until late in the evening.

The roof is lined underside with pinus ply, clear varnished with “Vitrilex” which keeps the wood very near its original light colour. The roofing is “Corro-plast”, a plastic corrugated roofing material with insertions here and there of corrugated perspex—over the kitchen, where windows in one wall would have
looked out into a neighbour’s backyard, and over the bathroom. The bathroom at a later stage will be entirely built around, and its light and ventilation have been allowed for in the roof.

Colour.

Outside the walls are clear varnished with white window members, the flush doors one bright yellow and the roof a rich chocolate brown.

The same method of allowing the materials to provide their own colouring has been used inside. Second quality plywood was painted—over the bed a dusty pink and on the west wall a grey-blue. The south wall is clear varnished rimu ply, the central block is Seraya ply, a beautiful golden ply with large patterns of open grain, also clear varnished. The cork floor has been waxed. Furnishings provide a rich counterpoint in colour and texture, deep burgundy for one set of curtains and natural for the other. Easy chairs are upholstered in the same colour combination. Accents of bright red are in the upholstery of the dining chairs. Further relief in colour is provided in a glimpse of the kitchen. Pale yellow speckled lino, while ceiling and the inside wall of soft grey lined with white benches and a red linoleum bench top.

Lighting is by fluorescent tubes in the kitchen and another tube is concealed in the top of the wardrobe shining on to the pinus ceiling and reflecting a warm light downwards. There is strip lighting over the bed. Elsewhere illumination depends on wall brackets and a standard lamp. The wall brackets can give indirect light by reflecting off the walls and ceiling, or can spot the dining table or the book in front of the fire.

Further Stages.

Later, when the family increases, or when a separate bedroom becomes desirable from the condition of the family purse, the second stage will be built. This not only gives more sleeping space, but also frees more of the main living area.

And to become a "family house" a complete unit of bedrooms, bathroom and playing space can be added, the child’s bedroom of the second stage becoming an entrance hall.

It is recognised that three visits by builders will be more costly in the long run than if the complete house were built now. But at the moment all that is needed is a small cheerful house, easy to work and easy to keep clean. Later, when more room is necessary the nucleus of the house can be added to.

MATERIALS USED

Concrete—Certified Concrete.
Cork Tiles—laid by M. B. Stevens.
Linoleum—laid by M. B. Stevens.
Plywood (Pinus, Rimu, Seraya, Weldtex) — Residential Construction Company.
Insulation—"Insulwool."
Stud Frames and Joinery—Jones Timber Co. Ltd.
Roofing, Corroplast—supplied by Dominion Sales Corporation.
Plumber—Roy McKelvey.
Painter—T. Mason.
Electrician—J. Parsons & Co. Ltd.
Furniture, Furnishings, and some Light Fittings—Furniture Fashions.
Fan—supplied by Plumbers Ltd.
Compact—Compacta Appliance Compacta — Compacta Appliances.
Cooker—supplied by Residential Construction Company.
Marble Fire Surround—supplied by Residential Construction Company.
Hardware—supplied by Residential Construction Company.
Perspex Washhand Basin—supplied by Plumbers Ltd.
Mosaic Shower Tray—installed by Briscoe Mills.
Perspex Skylights—supplied by Winstones.
Hot Water—by Metro.
Counterpoise Light Fittings—supplied by Watson Victor.
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LETTERS...

Dear Sir,

"Sharawag", writing in the October/November 1952 issue of *Design Review*, briefly stated the case for high density housing and related his arguments to the Freemans Bay re-housing scheme here in Auckland. He claims that the proposed densities for the new development are such that no more people will be housed there than are housed in the area now and, consequently, the project contributes nothing to curbing urban sprawl.

In reply, I would like to point out that the existing population of 6,500 people is largely overcrowded, in some cases living in two rooms occupying a single room. The provision of schools and open space is at a low standard. The proposed scheme will house 9,500 people on the same area and at the same time reduce overcrowding, make provision for a large new school and the extension of two existing schools, and increase the area of parkland from 16 acres to 85 acres.

The average net density for the Re-development is 75 people/acre obtained, as "Sharawag" observes, with the use of two-storied terrace houses. Multi-storied flat buildings for families were rejected for a number of reasons, some of which are listed here:

(a) The cost is not just high; it is prohibitive. Indeed, the saving in land cost due to the density of 75 persons/acre, does not offset the high cost of earthquake resistant multi-storied construction and the land cost of $1,000,000 is reached. The cost is far beyond what would reasonably be paid for any housing land.

(b) Flat living has an alarming effect on the birthrate in all cities of the western world.

(c) High density developments are vulnerable to disease and crime and spreading in time of war.

(d) Difficulty of supervision of children playing on the ground many floors below their flat.

Returning to the question of urban sprawl, "Sharawag" implies that the use of very high densities will result in large savings in transport, services and agricultural land. This is true when comparing net densities such as 120 persons/acre with the 75 persons/acre proposed for Freemans Bay, the gain is very small.

Indeed, if the whole of Auckland were to be rebuilt with housing at 120 persons/acre, and space was allocated as follows:

- 12,500 acres for all industrial, warehousing and commercial use
- 5,000 acres for a cultural group including university college, theatres, museum, libraries, churches, stadia, auditoria, etc.
- 6,250 acres for schools, shopping, playing fields, etc.
- 2,750 acres for housing 330,000 people at 120 persons/acre.
- 26,500 acres

then Auckland could be enclosed within the circumference of a circle 3.5 miles radius, centred on the Post Office. But, if Auckland were to be rebuilt on the basis proposed for Freemans Bay, namely 75 persons/acre, then the result is as follows:

- 15,600 acres industrial
- 5,000 acres cultural
- 6,250 acres schools, shopping, playing fields, etc.
- 4,400 acres for housing 330,000 people at 75 persons/acre.
- 28,150 acres

This corresponds to a radius of 3.75 miles or only 0.15 miles (260 yards) greater than the high density proposal. At 2.75 miles radius, parts of Mount Albert, Epsom, Meadowbank and Kohimarama and all beyond would pass back into pasture land.

E. C. McCLEAN.

"Sharawag's" reply is as follows:

Mr. McClean is right in correcting me on the numbers to be housed in the Freeman's Bay scheme. But as for the rest of his letter, I simply do not agree. My main argument remains unshaken.

Mr. McClean's other figures appear to be arbitrary, and constructed to suit his own argument. He compares the figure of 75 persons per acre with 120 for multi-storied developments, contending that maximum densities with maximum standards of light, sun and open space can be at least 200.

His figures for overall land use are also well out. 12,500 acres for industry and commerce is a lot. According to Mr. F. W. O. Jones, the Auckland Metropolitan Planning Officer, 10 acres per 1000 of the population is the figure taken as a guide in the Outline Development Plan. Thus on the basis of 330,000 taken by Mr. McClean, 3,300 acres would be sufficient for industrial and commercial purposes. An error of nearly 400 per cent! Five thousand acres for cultural activities is also excessive—more than the total for housing. Most of the activities under this heading are included under other headings. So this figure can be crossed off. The open space figure is high, but desirable. On the basis of these amended figures, the answer will be entirely different from that of Mr. McClean, and one not so favourable to his argument.

These figures are liable to confuse, and as Auckland is not surrounded by land there is not much point in considering the hypothetical case of all the population being housed at 75, 120 or 200 persons to the acre. In any case we must accept that full and human dignity of the people—the family people—will live in detached houses. But if they are all to continue to live in detached houses and our cities continue to grow, a point will be reached when conditions will become unbearable—they are rapidly becoming so in Auckland now. Thus it is important that those who can live in flats should do so. And at least one-third of the population could well live this way. Many more could live in terraces as proposed for Bay Area and the rest in single units. But to make it worthwhile there must be a much greater concentration than there is now—and this does not mean overcrowding. But it does mean some multi-storied development—8 or 10 stories.

To say that multi-storied housing is ruled out because of excessive costs shows that the overall problem has not been considered. If no other considerations entered into the flat, two-storied houses would certainly be cheaper than ten-storied. But this is not the picture. What are the costs for travelling to and from the suburbs; how much time is lost and nervous energy shattered in suburban transport; what are the costs of running servicing and administrating new suburbs; what is the loss to primary production through the continual encroachment on to first class farm land; and what is the result in terms of visual dreariness and indescribable monotony?

I suggest that to continue building such a proportion of low density housing is far and away more costly. In fact it is so costly that our whole urban economic structure is only maintained by higher and higher rating. Mr. McClean's other arguments against high flats I have heard before. What "alarming effect on the birthrate" is that of which he speaks? Alarming high, or alarmingly low? Can he give us some statistics or is this rather drawing on thin air? In Stockholm 86 per cent of the people live in apartments, nearly all tall ones, and their birthrate is much the same as ours and their general health higher. It all depends on what you are thinking of when you refer to multi-storied flats. Mr. McClean's argument on conditions of living in big cities as London and New York, where most of the housing lacks any elementary amenity. But who cares for this? My idea is based on the Scandinavian model, which could work as an example in New Zealand. Tall towers, four apartments to a floor, free standing with the highest standards of sun, air, light, view and open space.

Personally, I should like to thank the Auckland City Architect and his staff for the high standard of layout and design of the scheme itself. But I suggest that the town planners have failed to see the overall implications of their housing policy.
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Gramophone Notes

J. Gray

Having made their spectacular entry into the LP field, the E.M.I. chain of companies are settling down to a steady issue of microgroove discs, both at 33 1/3 and at the mid-way speed of 45, these latter obviously being intended as a convenient substitute for the old style 78, being, indeed, a 78 disc 'boiled down'. As promised, the companies are not neglecting the humble 78 user, and two of their newest achievements, the Sibelius concerto recorded by Isaac Stern and Sir Thomas Beecham, and the long-awaited Mahler 'Kindertotenlieder' by Kathleen Ferrier and the Vienna Philharmonic under Bruno Walter, have been issued almost simultaneously in both LP and 78 versions. The E.M.I. people in New Zealand have issued a price-list for their new records, both 33 and 45, so doubters who may soon expect supplies of the discs to vary our already rich diet of Decca and Nixa.

Decca appear to have forgotten that 78 exists—at least in the sphere of serious music, but their regular LP lists seem well planned. A Kathleen Ferrier recital of Bach and Handel arias looks most attractive on paper—for besides the expected numbers from 'Messiah' and 'St. Matthew Passion' there are some quite unfamiliar ones from 'Samson' and 'Judas Maccabaeus' (LXT 2757). The Grillers have turned their attention to some of the neglected early quartets of Mozart. Clemens Krauss and the Vienna Philharmonic are forging ahead with the major works of Richard Strauss. Backhaus seems to be involved in recording all the Beethoven piano sonatas, and Max Rostal and Franz Osborn have almost completed recording those for violin and piano. Works by Carl Nielsen, Sibelius, and some lesser known Scandinavian masters are being enshrined by the brilliant orchestra of the Danish State Radio (formerly a proud member of the H.M.V. group of orchestras), and to the list of Decca complete operas you may now add 'Tosca', 'Aida', and 'La Traviata'.

What grim E.M.I. have to say to all this? A complete 'Tristan and Isolde' for one thing. This is conducted by Purtwangler and features Flagstad. There will be regret that the recording could not have been made while Laurit Melchior was in his prime, the Tristan here being the German tenor Ludwig Suthaus, who has also sung the role in another complete recording, put out by the Urania company in America. The H.M.V. issue covers six discs (ALP 1036-5). Perhaps the most interesting of the H.M.V. symphonic releases is a performance of Walton's symphony, conducted by himself with the Philharmonia Orchestra (ALP 1027). Many will recall Decca's brave enterprise in recording this work under Sir Hamilton Harty at the time (1935) of its world premiere and personally I am intensively curious to hear it in a really modern recording. This grim and powerful work should appeal to those with a liking for modern music that never becomes too extreme.

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