

Dwellinghouse Construction Specification.—Parts VIII and IX of the Standard Code of Building By-laws have been most usefully supplemented by a separate comprehensive Standard Specification for Dwellinghouse Construction. The object of this specification is to ensure that the resources applied to housing construction will be employed to the best advantage on the most economic cost basis, having regard for the maintenance of sound standards of construction, hygiene, and general conditions. Whereas the Code of Building By-laws is confined to minimum requirements in respect of structural stability, public health, and other matters concerning which local authorities are vested with by-law-making powers, this specification establishes requirements in relation to the more detailed aspects relating to the actual materials and the methods that shall be employed in the construction of a dwellinghouse. These requirements, when read together with those contained in the relevant parts of the Standard Code of Building By-laws, should prove of valuable assistance to architects, builders, local authorities, and to Government Departments and to individuals who contemplate entering into contracts for the construction of dwellinghouses. Occupiers, whether owners or tenants, will also be assured concerning the essential considerations relating to materials, workmanship, and design in relation to houses constructed in accordance with the requirements of the specification and the Code. As a corollary to the preparation of the Standard Specification for Dwellinghouse Construction, a separate specification for the Installation of Radios is in the course of preparation.

Further Parts of Standard Code of Building By-laws in course of Preparation. In addition to the three parts mentioned above, which have been issued during the past year, work has proceeded on the following parts:—

Steelwork.—The formulation of this Part, which deals with the design and workmanship of steel-framed buildings, whether riveted, bolted, or welded, is now complete, and as soon as the final editing and legal scrutiny of these provisions have been carried out they will be published as a further Part of the Standard Code of Building By-laws. In view of the rapid advances in the use of welding as a means of connection during recent years and the advantages of this method in economy, speed, and quietness, special provision has been made for the use of welding in this Part of the Standard Code. This has entailed preparation of a separate Code of practice for the Workmanship of the Metallic Arc-welding of Mild Steel which has been completed and will be issued as a separate Code of practice. Not only will this separate Code enable welding to be employed on steel-framed structures with safety, but it will also provide a reliable basis for the use of welding in other major structures such as bridges, bulk petrol-storage tanks, and the like.

Masonry Buildings of Bearing Wall Construction.—Work is now proceeding on the revision of Section IV of the original Standard Model Building By-law, Sections I-X. The revised section will provide for all buildings constructed of unit masonry, whether brick, stone, or concrete, including hollow concrete blocks.

Monolithic Concrete Construction.—Arising out of the revision of the masonry section of the original Standard Model Building By-law, work has begun on the preparation of a separate Part of the Standard Code of Building By-laws to deal with monolithic buildings with concrete bearing walls arbitrarily reinforced.

Concrete Water Retaining Structures.—Preliminary attention has been given to the formulation of a separate part of the Standard Code of Building By-laws covering the erection of concrete water-retaining structures.

Standard Code of Plumbing and Drainage By-laws.—During the year the relevant committee commenced its review of the draft Standard Code of Plumbing and Drainage By-laws in the light of the comments received as a result of its circulation to the affected interests for comment. This will prove a lengthy undertaking in view of the large number of valuable, detailed comments received, which evidence a serious need for the completion and issue of the Standard Code at the earliest opportunity.

Building Materials Sectional Committee.—In view of the large volume of work which it has been necessary to undertake in connection with the preparation of Standard Specifications for Building Materials for citation in the standard by-laws, and the Standard Specification for Dwellinghouse Construction, a separate Building Materials Sectional Committee has been established during the year with appropriate sub-committees to deal with the various materials.

Asbestos-cement Roofing-sheets.—As a result of several accidents, some of which were fatal, involving workmen falling through roofs constructed of asbestos-cement sheets, the Standard Specification for these sheets has been supplemented by an additional part providing for adequate safeguards in the form of supports placed under the sheets. A further part to the Standard Specification, incorporating a code of practice for the fixing of asbestos-cement roofs, is also in the course of preparation.

Earthenware Roofing-tiles.—A Standard Specification for earthenware roofing-tiles is nearing completion. This specification will provide for two types of tiles, each of which will be uniform in basic dimensions and design. One of these types will be manufactured and used in the North Island, and the other in the South Island, so that adherence to the specification will avoid the serious difficulty of finding tile replacements when a diversity of types and dimensions is involved. The specification will also include minimum requirements in respect of breaking-strength, porosity, and the other factors which determine the durability and efficacy of the tiles.