

New Premises for New Plymouth Steam Laundry



MODERN LAUNDRY METHODS

QUALITY WASHING FOR CUSTOMERS.

"Better Business rather than Bigger Business" might well be the slogan of the New Plymouth Steam Laundry, a firm which is up with the times and alive to the requirements of its customers if ever there was one. The New Plymouth Laundry wants more business, but not at the expense of quality of workmanship. That is the reason for the new, modern, adequate building of the firm in Gill Street.

Sound, thorough, reliable work has brought its reward in the form of more custom. To keep faith with its oldest customers, to encourage new ones, to hold its reputation, to give the best service possible—that is why the present owner, Mr. W. J. Dunn, decided last year to build a bigger factory and install more plant. That the building is a credit to any street in any town can be seen from the picture.

But the picture does not show everything. It does not take the public inside and show them the quick, sure, safe methods by which laundry is handled, washed, dried, pressed and parcelled ready for delivery; nor the process known so popularly as the "Bag Wash."

There are many things one learns on investigation regarding the operations of a laundry that are entirely unknown to the man in the street or the woman in the home. Washing at home is a com-

paratively simple operation. One has a tub, board, boiler, washing machine—that is about all... all, except hard work. In the New Plymouth Steam Laundry washing, drying, starching, ironing are looked upon as actual manufacturing processes. Just like making paper, pies, or anything else!

"Why not?" says the owner. "Laundering requires precise machines and precise ingredients. We manufacture clothes-cleanliness, which is, next to bathing, the most important contribution to civilisation!"

It sounds reasonable. Like a newspaper, a laundry can not hide its work or any part of it. If it does not give what its customer wants, it loses trade. And in breaking fresh ground to seek more business it often has stern prejudices to remove. There is often the impression that washing by machine is detrimental to the fabric and shortens the life of clothes. This is not so. It is evident that there is less injury likely by laundry washing than home washing, for the obvious reason that there is no rubbing in the laundry—no hard washboards to take toll of the clothes. A concrete and convincing example of this can be seen at the laundry in the form of several articles which, after regular laundry washing and ironing for four years, show only one sign of deterioration, due to ordinary wear on the person.

One trial at the laundry should be sufficient to make any woman realise that sanitation and cleanliness are more readily attained where the quantities of hot water and pure soap are practically limitless than they are in any hand laundress' small kitchen or in the home. The water softener, especially, is an advantage which is certainly not available to most homes, and since it does away with

the necessity for strong alkaline washing powders, which are so hard on fabrics and colours, it is a strong point for the undoubted fact that home washing is where "substitute methods" are most likely to be used.

Every good firm has a little history. The New Plymouth Laundry is no exception. It was established in 1901, and it supplied the town's needs up to a point in the wooden building next to the present one till 1926, when the present owner took over and expanded the business. It was one of the first laundries in the Dominion to introduce the "bag wash," wet or dry, that has become such a boon to housewives.

The expansion meant the installation of two new washing machines, an hydro extractor ironing machine and press, two new delivery vans, an electric stoker, and, of course, the new building, which is a ferro-concrete structure specially designed. At the front is the public counter, easy of access from the street, private offices; in the main part the laundry proper; at the rear the boiler and machine room; and above the quarters for the staff.

Those who have patronised the bag wash and those who have contemplated patronising it might have wondered how the various articles in the bag are washed and returned without being lost or mixed. The first thing that happens when the job of washing is taken out of the home by the New Plymouth Laundry is the picking up of the clothes by one of the delivery vans. The driver is anxious to retain business and his job, so he sees that the bag is properly labelled and handled. Once at the laundry the clothes are emptied into a compartment of one of the washing machines, the bag with them. There they go through a thorough washing process by soft water, pure,

natural soap, and under controlled temperature. Then comes the rinsing, the blueing, and thence into the hydro-extractor. The last-named extracts the water without the articles having to go through a wringer or any other such contrivance that would injure the fabric.

If it is a wet bag wash that is wanted, the clothes are returned to the bag and the customer; if a dry wash, they go through the drying machine or the drying room, and the ironing machine. It takes two hours to complete a dry wash, so it can be seen that just as much time is given in the laundry as in the home.

All the machines, it is emphasised, are precise, and each is designed for its own particular task in the manufacture of clothes cleanliness. The most delicate textures are handled with skill and care by the employees and the machines. Attention is called to the efficacy and expertness in handling large, unwieldy pieces, and the gratifying results with fine materials. It is obvious that if these things are well done, the plainer and less difficult articles will offer no problem.

Not only does the laundry handle the washing of the home. It caters for hotels and ships, jobs that have to be done quickly and properly. It has the equipment and staff to do the biggest or the smallest work.

Not the least important factor is the fact that the New Plymouth Laundry is a local enterprise. It employs local people and patronised a local firm (Messrs. Boon Bros., Ltd.) in the erection of its new building.

An unsolicited compliment to the service provided by the laundry was paid by an architect who, after an inspection, said he was ready to propose that in future homes should be built without wash-houses.

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