

# QUOMPS.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9 1941.

THE point at issue arising from the decision of the Council to house a stonebreaker at Quomps is not whether or not we are to have a stonebreaker. This has already been decided, though it was by no means a unanimous decision and weighty-arguments were voiced against it. That decision, however, has been made and we do not seek to have it reversed. The credit, if the stonebreaker proves to be a success, will be due to those who faced the opposition and secured the passing of the resolution: the blame, if the project should turn out to be a failure, will attach to the same persons.

The point at issue is — where shall it be housed?

In an old guide book, published towards the end of last century, it is recorded that: Some people have suggested that Quomps should be made into a recreation ground with a gravel walk by the river's edge; while others have recommended the erection of a bathing-place along its western bank by the river.

"A few years ago," the guide continues, "the Town Council were desirous of utilising Quomps as a site to deposit dry rubbish, and at the same time to improve an open space, but the Lord of the Manor requiring a nominal rent (1s. a year), the Council, not recognising the claim set up, resolved to waive their proposal. "

It was in 1922 that the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, after an enquiry held in the Town Hall, consented to the enclosure of the land for the purpose of forming a public park or recreation ground. The Council being permitted to tip their rubbish, provided they covered it with turf as soon as the surface of the land was raised sufficiently.

Then followed the decision made last month to use part of this "public park or recreation Ground" to house some new Corporation machinery.

In this week's issue we publish a letter from a Councillor giving his reason for refraining from voting at the Council meeting and, of course, ample reason it was that the site should be reconsidered by the Health and Highways Committee; but his letter contains the rather surprising statement:—

"Now, Mr. Editor, neither you nor, naturally, Councillor McArdle, mention the pertinent fact that the stonebreaker is only for war-time usage."

This might have been a pertinent point in the discussion on the recommendation to purchase a stonebreaker; but if used in the present argument, seems to hint that after the war (as the machine is only required for usage during the war) it will be taken down and the people will once again have the unrestricted use of Quomps. If that is the correct interpretation of his letter, it makes queer reasoning, because first, another site will still have to be found when the war is over and, secondly, unless the war lasts more than six years, we shall not cover its initial cost plus interest.

The cost of the whole outfit has been placed at £350, and it is estimated that its output will be 100 tons a year, with an average saving of 12/6 per ton. This means that the average annual saving will be £62 10s. A war any shorter than six years, therefore, is going to leave us a deficit on our stone-breaker account, even if the average rate of saving is achieved.

No, the pertinent point is not that the machine is required for war usage only: the pertinent point is why should it be housed on the people's land when alternative sites exist?