

Having now sketched out what is to be, let me now come to my second point—viz., the qualifications of the architect to accept the responsibility of carrying out this comparatively new branch of his work. I mention the word “qualifications” in this connection because I wish to make it particularly clear that if architects are to undertake this kind of work—though they as a profession may not realize it—they have a great deal to learn about town planning, they have a great deal to learn about a modern system of housing, and they have a great deal to learn both of a practical and common sense nature, that is at the moment much better understood by the engineer and the surveyor. In my opinion, the surveyor and engineer have, since the passing of the Town Planning Act, studied the subject in all its bearings, both much more seriously and much more generally than have the architects, and this not only in its immediate relation to the width and construction of streets but also with the wider view which we architects associate with architectural effect. I say this because I feel that our profession must bestir itself if it is to qualify itself to undertake the great work that undoubtedly lies ahead.

Let me make myself quite clear, and let me say that the housing scheme of the future will depend for its success upon an entirely different set of interests from those that have obtained in the past. It will not be the interest that we have been wont to associate with the picturesque village of the past, those humble records of a rural history spread over long and restful periods of slow change in architectural style, in the different use of materials and in the weathering of brick and stone. The new schemes cannot depend upon any interests

like these. They were built under totally different conditions from those obtaining to-day; their builders were country carpenters and their workmen real craftsmen, or if in Georgian days, when contracting became common, they worked under some inborn architectural influence, were not entirely absorbed in pocketing discounts and juggling with advances, and were quite simple men.

Nor again will the cottage of the future be built by the speculative gentlemen purely as a commercial enterprise, as have practically all the workmen's houses erected since the middle of last century. No, the housing scheme of the future will be laid out on town-planning lines, and the commercial aspect will not loom largest in the field; and whilst nowhere will there be standard streets it goes without saying that the cottages themselves will be built to standardized plans. But both cottage and street will now for the first time be considered conjointly, and in the grouping and composition that will follow will lie the architect's opportunity.

The recent cottage competition has proved a valuable and instructive lesson to the architectural profession. A general inspection of the designs submitted shows very clearly that as a profession we have not yet realized that the cottage of the future cannot be the cottage of the past, the former being necessarily a unit in a composition, the latter having an individual entity.

I sincerely hope that cottage building in the future will come to be the work of the architect. It is his own fault if it doesn't, but he must not think of cottages separately. I think that the profession would do well to have an exhibition of housing schemes. The profession must hold on to this housing while the nation is interested.

Concrete Beautiful

By T. J. Clark, A.I.C., in The "Builder," London.

IT has been stated that any style of architecture may be imitated and reproduced in concrete. True; but this violates one of the essential canons of art, since, as Ruskin says, “Art is Truth”; and to employ one material for the imitation of another is to debase the uses of the material so employed, and stultify that which it imitates. It is not the function of concrete—and this we state with all emphasis—to pretend to be other than it is. Of its strength and durability there is no longer any question; the nature of the material needs but a brief consideration in order to realize its perfect adaptability to any design; and the great variety of effects which may be obtained by legitimate surface treatment in order to produce a pleasing appearance, render unnecessary, as well as

illogical, any attempt to make concrete masquerade as brick or stone.

It may be taken as an axiom that every house should be a home, and every home should be as healthful, as comfortable and as beautiful as it can be made. The first two aspects of the question it is outside the scope of this article to consider, but a few suggestions will be offered which may assist in the realization of the third.

The most prominent feature of a building, and that which has the greatest effect upon the eye is its design and style. Reference has already been made to the adaptability, in this connection, of concrete, one of whose chief characteristics is plasticity; and when it is remembered that it may be moulded to any desired shape, it will be seen that the capable designer,