



OUR FIRST ANNUAL HOUSE NUMBER  
—APPRECIATION OF DESIGN IN DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN OUR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

IN THIS, the eighth number of the Second Volume of "CONSTRUCTION," we present our *First Annual House Number*.

While it is true that architects, engineers, contractors and prospective builders, alike are greatly interested in the larger and more difficult problems involved in the erection of such structures as office buildings, factories, banks, churches, bridges, etc., it is also true that everybody is interested in houses, whether architect, engineer, contractor or layman. The dwelling, the home, the place of abode, is the one structure that, it is the ambition of every man and woman to build, buy or improve. It is the homes of a people, a nation, or a community that best characterize their culture, their tastes, their social and commercial welfare and ambitions.

In Canada, as in other new countries, while our forefathers built well, they, as a rule, designed badly, for two reasons: first, because sheer necessity demanded the pursuing of a course, along the lines of the least resistance; secondly, because they were too much engaged in hewing the way for the nation to be, to give the required thought and consideration of design and the science of building construction.

The results of these early conditions are altogether too evident in many of the older houses we find in our Canadian cities and towns to-day. Architects were few, because their services were very little in demand. The first consideration of the owner was not design, but construction. Artisans were called upon to both design and construct, and with their lack of training in design, the dwelling produced was in most part, four brick walls with a gable or so decorated with jig-saw scrolls and turned spindles.

We are, fortunately, passing this stage and to-day owners are becoming to realize more and more that to have a structure, to be called home, it must express to a great extent the individual tastes and ideas of the dweller. And to have these tastes and ideas carried out economically and artistically, most builders know that they must consult a trained man (an architect). There is, nevertheless, a present day tendency (that is most deplorable) toward the "ready made house," the product of the speculative builder, who erects houses after a shrewdly devised flexible plan. We say shrewdly devised plan, because it has been designed to produce the best appearing structure at a cost that will yield the greatest profit to the speculative builder.

We often find a hundred houses built after practically the same plan. The treatment of the front gable, or the location of one or two bay windows or the shape and style of the front porch may differ in some few cases, but the block plan is the same, the interior woodwork, the hardware and the shape and size of the window and door frames are all the same.

The architect designs to meet, as best he can, with his training, the taste and requirements of each individual client, while the speculative builder builds after a carefully devised plan, a house he hopes to sell at a profit, to a man who may be induced to accept his shrewdly designed structure.

This evil does not usually exist in the case of dwellings that cost more than five thousand dollars. Owners who can afford to spend more than this amount, have ideas of their own, and realize the necessity of having a trained man carry them out. The dwellings of the masses, carry with them as much or more importance, than those of the more well to do, and it was to promote better design in cheap and moderate priced houses, that brought about our decision to issue an *Annual House Number*, in which we shall aim to deal principally with moderate priced dwellings.

It is our hope that through the publication of a large number of creditable designs from all portions of Canada, and characteristic designs from other portions of the globe, in a large *Annual House Number*, we shall be enabled to bring the architect and the home builder, closer together, and thus promote a better appreciation of design and aid in improving the residence architecture of our country.

Without apology, we beg to state that we fully realize that we have been unable to give, in many cases, just the class of design we would have wished, but when the task of getting together photos, plans, details and descriptions for a sufficiently large number of designs, to select from (especially in view of the fact that some architects are disinclined to permit their plans to be reproduced) is fully appreciated, we feel confident that this, our first *Annual House Number*, will meet with the approval of the profession and the industry generally.

We beg to submit to our readers that this number of CONSTRUCTION is larger and contains more illustrations of houses than any other individual number of a periodical ever issued in Canada, the United States, or Great Britain.

We want to make our 1910 annual still larger, better, and more representative of work in every corner of Canada, and we are prepared now to receive designs, with plans, photographs and descriptions, for next year's number.