

## CHAPTER II.

## The Use of Timber in Australia.

The estimated annual consumption of timber in Australia, excepting for fuel, posts, piles and unmanufactured fencing material is given in the following table:—

*Consumption of Lumber and Timber in Australia, 1913.*

	Quantity, Feet B.M.	Value.
Domestic Australian production.....	566,000,000	\$16,800,000
Imported lumber.....	432,000,000	14,318,400
"    logs.....	23,000,000	580,800
Total.....	955,000,000	\$31,699,200

The average annual consumption of manufactured timber per head, 196 feet board measure, is not so great as might be expected in a new country, the populated parts of which are fairly well clothed with trees. The truth is that, although very little of populated Australia is destitute of trees as is the Canadian prairie, and the greater part of the settled country is at least sparsely wooded, it is only in Western Australia and Tasmania, states containing together barely 11 per cent of the population of the Commonwealth, that a large proportion of the buildings are constructed wholly of wood.

The annual per capita consumption of wood in Australia, aside from railway sleepers, is 175 feet; the annual per capita consumption on the treeless Canadian prairie, on the same basis is 800 feet.

There are several well defined reasons for the much smaller consumption of timber in Australia.

Land settlement and development are not proceeding so rapidly in Australia as in Canada, with the result that a much smaller proportion of new buildings, transportation facilities and public works are erected annually.

Almost two-fifths of the population of Australia lives in six cities; 43 per cent of the total population lives in towns containing 3,000 or more persons. This urban population does not require the same proportionate number of separate dwellings and outbuildings as an agricultural population. Substitutes are everywhere used in a greater proportion by an urban than by a rural population.

## FEW WOODEN HOUSES.

Over 97 per cent of the population of Australia is of British descent. This European population has transplanted to Australia a European type of house; the workman's cottage of London, Birmingham or Manchester, brick walls, tile or iron roof and plaster finish covers solid square miles in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. No distinctly Australian type of building has been developed as in the case of Canada where two hundred years on this forested continent has evolved the wooden building. When considering the erection of a new building the Canadian thinks in terms of wood and the Australian thinks in terms of brick or stone. The one searches for the wood, the other searches for the substitute.

The small four-square European type of brick or stone dwelling is adapted neither to the hot Australian summer climate nor to the broad Australian spaces. A type of timbered bungalow would be cooler, more livable, better looking and would cost less.