

# *The Housing Problem In Nova Scotia: An Evil, Its Growth And Its Remedy.*

---

"The world advances, and in time outgrows  
The laws that in our fathers' time were best;  
And, doubtless, after us, some purer scheme  
Will be shaped out by wiser men than we,  
Made wiser by the steady growth of truth."

THE time is near when the people of this country will insist upon a recognition of the fact that food and clothing are not the only prime necessities of life. A decent home must also be considered one of man's primary needs. The home is the key of good citizenship. The wage-earner has an inalienable right to marry; and if he, as the father of a family, cannot occupy a decent home except at a cost out of proportion to his earnings, there is something radically wrong with social conditions. A grave evil exists if any family be forced to pay an extortionate price to avoid physical and moral injury. This evil exists in some of the towns and cities of Nova Scotia to-day.

The social well-being of any community in Nova Scotia must be measured by the standard of living at the bottom, and not by the standard at the top. If that test be applied to the cities and many of the towns in our province it will be found that there is a social wound which must be healed, and which neglect will render more sensitive. Housing conditions prevail in many parts of this province which undermine and vitiate character. The reform of these conditions is required by sound public economy, and demanded by justice. The chief remedy lies in the more general distribution of private ownership. With the co-operation of the federal and provincial governments, houses in rural as well as in urban localities should be built to sell to wage-earners on easy terms.

Our strongest sympathy should go to the ordinary, unskilled laborer, who has no home, and no hope of accumulating sufficient to buy a home. Sometimes he and his wife and children are forced to live under conditions that stunt body, mind and soul. We, in this province, are doing nothing to improve