

# Modern Type Houses Better and Cheaper

## New Methods of Construction More Efficient.

(By C. H. N.)

While, during the past few years, there has been talk in the United States of the pre-fabricated house and the serious suggestion at one time that mass production of factory homes would bring America out of depression, the Canadian building industry has made what is probably the most modern and most practical contribution to large-scale housing. It consists of a new method of construction quicker, cheaper and more efficient than the old.

Home construction has always been a more or less involved affair for the home builder. It has always been impossible, for instance, for the prospective builder to go into a show-room, select the house he wants and order it sent up, as he would in the case of a piece of furniture or an automobile. First he has had to deal with a real estate agent and secure a building lot. Then he has had to secure the services of an architect and have the house planned, incorporating his own ideas as to what his home should contain. Then he has had to employ the contractor to build his home, while the architect supervises construction to see that the contractor lives up to specifications.

That in itself has been complicated enough, but the contractor too has been engaged in a complicated business. He has not been able simply to employ a few men and tell them to go ahead and build the house. The contractor has had to employ one type of labour to mix and pour concrete for foundations, carpenters to erect frame work, brick layers to lay bricks, or stone masons for stone, and other trades for inside work. The result has been frequently a long and tiresome construc-

tion period, differing only in minor details from the methods of home building a century or more ago.

A few years ago one branch of the Canadian construction industry conducted a long study of home building methods and finally produced a revolutionary change. It is this change which is in large part making economical, practical and efficient home construction possible in Canada today. And the discoveries made by these Canadian experts now promise to introduce new building methods in other countries as well.

First proposal of the building experts was to substitute man-made building materials for those made by nature. This substitution, it was realized, had already been made, with advantage in other industries. Plastics, for instance, have taken the place of many natural materials and man-made rubber is known to be superior to natural rubber for certain purposes. Because of ancient prejudices and customs, however, it was realized that the man-made materials must resemble as much as possible those of nature.

At that time asphalt shingles, which consist merely of selected wool fibre impregnated with asphalt and surfaced with stone granules, were a popular Canadian roofing material. If these man-made shingles can be used successfully on roofs, the experts argued, why could they not also be used, in some other form, on exterior walls. After long periods of experimentation and testing a successful wall exterior was developed and it consisted simply of asphalt shingles, backed with strong insulating board and cut into strips instead of individual shingles. It was a simple matter to develop new dies and patterns to make these board-backed shingles resemble bricks, wood shingles, stone or stucco and the building industry had its first modern man-made wall material.

Since that time great improvements have been made in what became known as insulated sidings and architects and

contractors became keenly interested in what is now accepted as a new and more modern method of home construction. With this method home building has become considerably simplified. After the foundation is laid the carpenters construct a frame house and sheathe it in the usual manner. The same carpenters then take the strips of insulated sidings and nail them directly over the frame. They then lay the asphalt shingles on the roof and the house exterior is completed. Construction has been quicker because of the absence of "water" products, those products which require mixing of mortars, etc. One of the first small homes to be completely built by this new construction method took less than two months to complete, with a small working crew.

Entirely practical, these modernly-constructed homes are also considered to be more efficient than those built of natural products. The sidings themselves are backed with insulating material and inner walls are made of insul board which is also an insulation. Fuel costs are consequently reduced. Roofs and walls are entirely fire-safe. Exteriors require no painting, except for the wood trim around windows, doors and, perhaps, roofs. Interior walls may be either painted or papered.

Closest practical approach to pre-fabrication of homes in Canada this new method of home construction is attracting the interest of homebuilders, contractors and architects throughout Canada and in the United States. It is an important contribution made to the construction industry by Canadians.

### FOR THE BREAKFAST NOOK

If the Breakfast Nook in a kitchen is crowded install a shelf on the wall above the electric outlet and paint or enamel it harmonize or contrast with your breakfast nook furniture. Such a shelf will give you a place to set the toaster during breakfast and will hold accessories between meals.

# Questions, Answers, On Housing Problem

## Some Questions That Have Been Asked More Than Once.

(Canadian Housing News)

Q.—Is it necessary to employ an architect if you plan to build a home?

A.—It is not essential but it is wise to employ an architect. The cost will be well repaid through experienced advice you will receive and careful checking of specifications and building.

Q.—Are insulated siding exteriors fire proof?

A.—Insul-brick, insulated shingle sidings, etc. are fire-safe materials. That is, they will not catch on fire if an adjoining house is burning.

Q.—What is the most satisfactory flooring to lay over a concrete base?

A.—The flooring generally accepted by architects and builders as most satisfactory for laying over concrete is asphalt tile. It is not subject to dampness and will not rot, as linoleum will, for instance.

Q.—Can we buy an old house and rebuild it on our own land under the terms of the National Housing Act?

A.—In order to have the advantage of the Housing Act it would be necessary to completely dismantle the old house and merely use the materials in it for constructing the new home. If that were done a loan could be made under the Housing Act. However, if part of the houses is to be used the builder can secure a loan up to \$2,000 under the Home Improvement Plan. This loan may be arranged through any bank or bank branch.

Q.—I am planning to build a year-round cabin for use in both summer and winter holidays. How can it be inexpensively built and insulated so that it will not take too long to heat in winter?

A.—If it is to be a frame cabin the simplest solution is to apply insulated sidings on the exterior, providing both insulation and fire safety, and line the interior walls and ceilings with insul-board. In that way the cabin will be double insulated and also will require no painting.

Q.—White painted bungalows are most attractive but keeping them clean is a constant problem. What is the most satisfactory method?

A.—The problem of "grey" white houses has been solved this year by Canadian chemists. Trutone whiter than white paint sheds dirt and grime and is the chemical answer to an old Canadian problem.

Q.—Flat-roofed houses are increasingly popular in the U.S. Are they practical in Canada?

A.—There are a number of flat-roofed houses in Canada but because of heavy snow conditions here the sloping roof is still favored by most architects and builders. Most popular modern roofing material is the asphalt shingle which is colorful as well as efficient. In Canada there is not the same opportunity to use a flat roof as an outdoor living room as there is in warmer climates.

Q.—How should I go about finding a reputable building contractor?

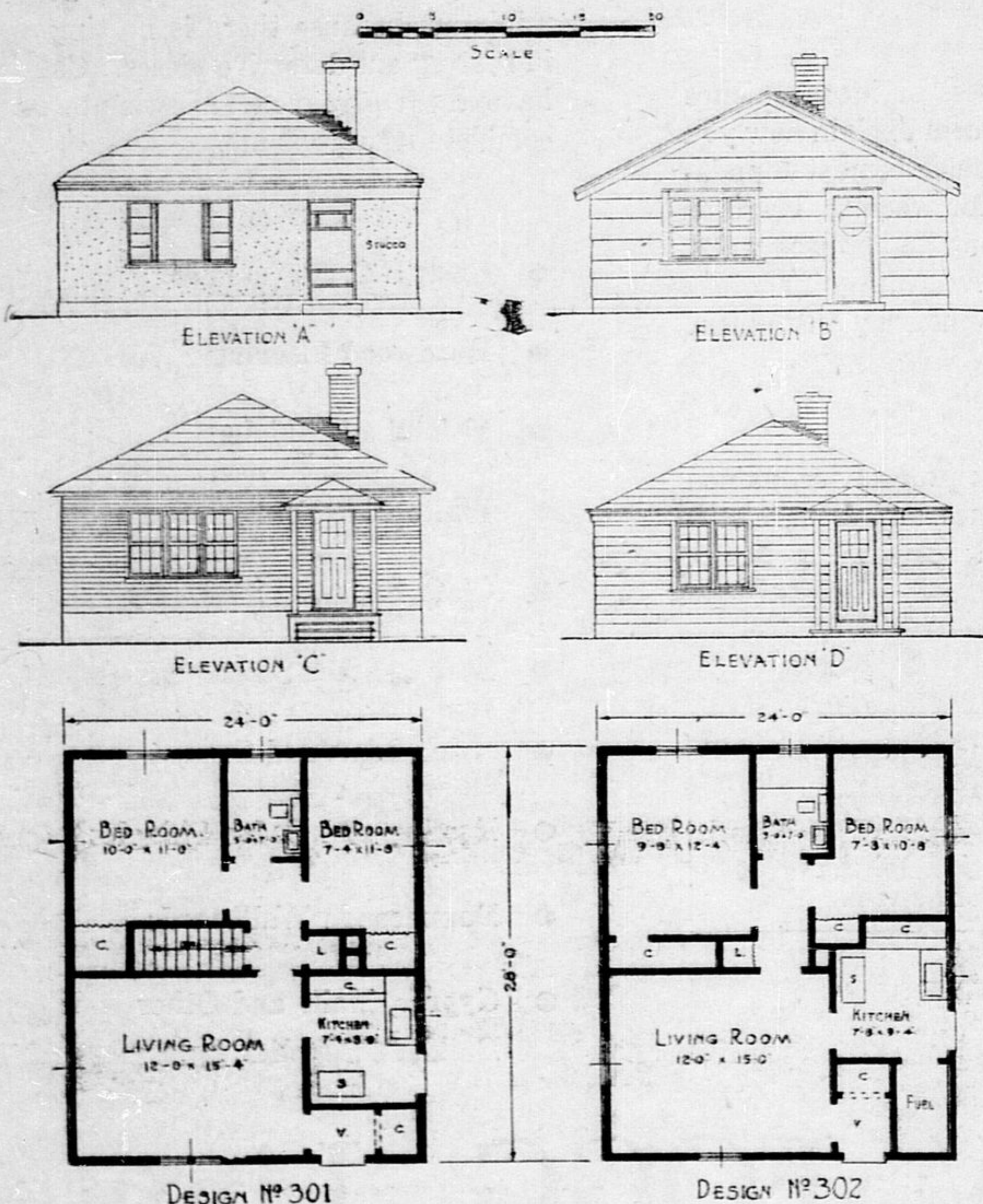
A.—There are many reputable contractors in Canada and only a few who cannot safely be employed. The best thing to do is consult your architect. If you are building under the National Housing Act, of course, the lending company must approve your selection of a contractor before you get your loan. And lending companies are very careful to see that the contractor selected is reliable.

## Rideau Hall Re-decorated for Visit of King and Queen

Ottawa, May 13—In preparation for the visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen to the Dominion capital in May, Rideau Hall, home of the Governor General and the Royal residence during the visit, has been renovated, re-decorated and generally polished up for the occasion. One of the first renovation contracts let was for reflooring the vestibule, hall and gentlemen's cloak room on the ground floor and the ladies' cloak room on the first floor. The new flooring, white and green, Mountain design, flexible tile, is a distinctive Canadian material and will brighten considerably all the rooms in which it is being used.

# NATIONAL HOUSING ACT

## MINIMUM COST HOUSE



NOTE: IF HOUSE IS BUILT WITH BRICK VENEER OR SOLID BRICK EXTERIOR WALLS, DIMENSIONS TO BE 24'-8" x 28'-8"

WORKING DRAWINGS OF THIS HOUSE HAVE BEEN PREPARED BY THE HOUSING ADMINISTRATION AND A COMPLETE SET CONSISTING OF 4 SETS OF BLUE PRINTS AND 4 NATIONAL HOUSING MEMORANDUM SPECIFICATIONS (TO BE FILLED IN BY THE OWNER AND BUILDER) MAY BE PURCHASED FOR THE SUM OF \$10.00 ORDER BY NUMBER FROM: HOUSING ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE OTTAWA ONTARIO

NOTE: WHEN ORDERING PLANS STATE WHETHER DESIGN NO 301 OR 302 IS DESIRED AND WHICH OF ELEVATIONS A-B-C-OR D IS REQUIRED