

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HOUSE

The first houses in different countries of the world were made of wood. At that time the greater part of our planet was covered with thick forests. Even in those days men found ways of using wood as a building material. In some places they tied together the tops of several trees and covered them with the hides (skins) of animals. In other places they covered them with leaves or grass.

The primitive people's first houses were tents or huts. Primitive building required no tools. The invention of tools permitted the cutting of stones and timber. Stone was the most convenient building material in countries where there was not much wood but plenty of stone.

People began to use stone widely to build their houses many centuries ago. With the development of stone cutting finer tools appeared.

The column has played an important part in the history of building. Most of the building of old times was based upon the column and beam method of construction.

About 4,000 years before our era the Egyptians possessed great constructional know-how (ability). They built simple houses by present standards. They used bricks which in their most primitive form were not burned, but were hardened by being dried in the sun. Since the middle ages, brickwork has been in constant use everywhere, in every sort of construction and in every architectural style. They made flat roofs because there was very little rain in Egypt. Their buildings were simple in construction but very beautiful. We still admire their monuments, sphinxes and palaces.

Greek builders learned much from Egyptian builders. They built their houses with slanting roofs because the climate of these two countries differs greatly. Soon Greek builders became second to none in column making. But they added the arch, thus adding much strength and beauty to their buildings.

The use of precast concrete, a very advanced construction technique, has many advantages over other building materials. Precast building units can be assembled at the site all the year round in any weather. The precast concrete technique which is constantly being improved in our country, plays a great role in our extensive building program.