

A Department For Home Planners

BY JAMES S. FREAR.

WHAT are the qualifications of the man who is to build your home. The answer to that question is of greater importance than all of the choices of plan or architecture or the selection of the materials and methods which you might make. On his man rests the responsibility of making the realization of your dream castle a home of permanence and beauty—or just a shell.

So much of controversy and criticism regarding the building industry has been bruted about for the last few years that it stands us in good stead to look well to the kind of man who is to do our building. And to do this intelligently we must analyze his characteristics of business and building methods.

Is the builder of your choice a proud man? Does he take the pride in his work and accomplishments that makes him glad to place on every job where he works a sign that says plainly that he is standing back of this job? No matter what a man's business may be, if he is proud of his accomplishments he will seek ways of telling about them. The builder who takes pride in his work usually advertises the fact on

THIS FOUR-POSTER BED NOT A COLONIAL TYPE

By MARIAN MOORE.
You usually think of a four-poster bed as being of a definite Colonial type for a Colonial bedroom, but a glance at this four-poster will convince you that its design is far removed from the general run of



early American designs. It is, however, another triumph of the ability of its designer to combine details from several different styles and temper them with some new ideas of his own. Carried out in walnut of that beautiful chocolate brown color, it becomes a part of an exceedingly handsome bedroom suite.

The best thing about adding bedroom furnishings to your worldly goods is that you have wide variety in selecting the pieces that you want, and when all is said and done, you have a new room which is your pride and joy. If you want twin beds, here's to all the more comfort for you who occupy them. If you want the very newest conceit in dressing tables, you can have the four-piece group, which consists of two narrow chests of drawers, a table, and a mirror. Or, if you like, you can have the regulation table or vanity dresser, as all are in good taste, and you need only to make your selection.

Even bedroom chairs have taken on a new guise. If your heart is fairly yearning for more comfort you can omit the little rocker and choose a small upholstered armchair, such as is made expressly for bedrooms and covered in a gay chintz or perhaps a rich silk moire or brocade. Lacking plenty of closet space, you can also take advantage of the chiffonier. Write to Marian Moore, care of this newspaper, for advice or information about home furnishing or decorating, sending stamped, addressed card for reply. Copyright, American Home Bureau.

Picking The Right Contractor Is Most Important When You Decide To Build That House; He Must Take Pride In His Work And Know Materials.

materials of the exterior walls and roofs are the same as they were then. Into them has come much of refinement, and to the methods of building have come much of change within the last few years. The builder of your home should be the sort of man who is thoroughly conversant with these changes and betterments.

What are the materials of construction which your builder advises? Many there are of the newer materials which have much to commend them. The builder who is alive to every opportunity for betterment knows each of them and the benefits, if any, which they will bring to your home. You are entitled to these benefits and betterments, and it is through your builder that they will be obtained.

Have you chosen a builder who specializes in home construction? The tendency of the age is toward specialization and if is a wholesome tendency. The builder who has a particular line on which he places his entire effort is bound to be more thoroughly conversant with every factor surrounding it than is the one who spreads his activities over the entire field. The man who is building nothing but homes should, at least, know best how to build them, and will be the best fitted to advise you in this venture.

Does your builder advertise? The man who is seeking home construction, and who is not afraid to tell everyone that he is aggressively after business, is the man that is safe to tie in your building venture. It is more than likely that this will be your sole building experience of a life-time, for that reason alone the selection of the man who is to be your builder is all the more important, and should be carefully analyzed.

Methods Are Important Building methods are of intense

importance. The mechanical aids to builders which have been developed in recent years have changed, to a great degree, the time required to complete a structure. This time element is worth something to you. The more mechanical aids present, the less of expensive labor is to be required. The less of expensive labor required the lower will be the cost of constructing your home.

It will be well to look to the mechanical equipment of the builder whom you will choose. If he is taking advantage of these aids to better building then you will be more than likely to have a better building for having employed him. The relation of machinery to lowered costs is a very close one.

What is the record of your builder? What do you know of the homes which he has already constructed? These will tell you much of what you may expect in the erection of your home. If they show care and precision in their handling, then you may look for the same elements to characterize your home. If there are marks of carelessness, then it will be

well to look to some other builder as the one you will choose.

Contract form merits considerable of your attention. Each builder has a distinct form which he prefers to use. The most generally used is known as the Standard Short form. It makes use of the plans and specifications, and outlines carefully just what the contractor will do, and at what price. It has been in use for many years. Its use is well established in practice; and, in general, it is the most satisfactory form of all.

Some, however, prefer to use the contract form known as a cost plus contract. In this form, which has many variations, the actual costs on the building are used as the basis of payment and the contractor receives a fixed percentage on these costs as his recompense. Fairly used it is a fair contract, but there is in it an opportunity for the unscrupulous contractor to add to the fair costs of the structure and thus increase the percentage which he will receive.

There was never yet a home designed that had in it every feature which the owner desired. As the

structure progresses changes will enter into the work. These changes are classed as "extras," items not cared for in the original contract. Care must be taken that something definite regarding charges on these items is on record at the time the change is authorized. To do this will, in many cases, save annoyances and disputes at a later date.

In the cost plus contract the "extras" go in as a part of the cost, though even here care should be

taken that the expense of these items is well established at the time they are ordered.

Time and Material Contract

One other form of contract is frequently used and, where there is sufficient capital to care for it, is a good form for both parties concerned. It is known as the time and material contract. The home owner contracts to pay all of the material bills and the wage roll each week, adding to the final payment a percentage for the builder. This is a variation of the cost plus form which enables the investor to follow closely the costs as they occur.

Whatever the contract form, it is always well to have its provisions certified by some legal advisor that both you and the builder be amply protected in event of future misunderstandings. Your builder may be

the sort of fellow in whom you have the utmost confidence, but even here it is well to make certain that you will be able to hold him in continued respect, and provide yourself with the legal advice which insures equitable contractual relations. Your builder, then, is alive to the most modern of methods. He holds his work up as his most worthwhile achievement. He is aggressively seeking new work, and not ashamed to let you or anyone else know that he is in the business of building. He is a better builder of better buildings for the reason that he employs the most advanced materials, methods and machinery. He is most willing to meet you on a fair contract, and helps you to provide for the possible emergencies that may arise while the structure is under way. If he is this sort of a builder—then he is the builder for your home.

An Honest Builder
I know of a builder down in the southwest who is this sort of a contractor. For some reason the interior trim lumber which was supplied him on a certain job failed to stand up under the service that was given it. At the first opportunity he went back into the home and, without expense to the owner made a complete replacement of the faulty trim. That man took pride in his work and for that reason was a good builder to employ on any job.

Is your builder a live, up-to-date contractor? Is he following the better methods and materials which have been the developments of late years? In general, we are building today quite as homes were built centuries ago. The individual members of the structure are the same form, placement and work as they were a thousand years ago. The

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