ONE of the most interesting developments in American architecture is the cement house. Under this generic term we may class concrete houses, plaster or stucco houses, in fact any form of domestic architecture in which cement construction or application forms a dominant visible note. Because of its adaptability to the American idea of comfort, the simplicity and dignity of the cement house has made a strong appeal. It gives the home builder an attractive house, a strong house, a house obedient to the needs of the seasons,—warm in winter and cool in summer, always, of course, bearing in mind that it is properly constructed. Our architects have attained proficiency in eliminating any disagreeable features to be found in some of the old world cement houses, picturesque ancestors though they be to our own. Again the American sanitary engineer has invested cement house-building with the perfect laws of his profession, a thing the American home maker has come to be insistent upon.

We must admit that our climate under any conditions is not conducive to the production of the velvety lawns of old England, to the mysterious forests of gnarled beeches one finds in France, nor does this country disclose the terra-cotta aspect of the hill country of Italy or the serrated coasts of the fjordlands of Norway. Nevertheless our landscape is a varied and interesting one, and demands the builder’s consideration of it as a proper setting for the sort of house he wishes to live in. It is the adaptability of the cement house to any part of our landscape that again makes for its gain in popular estimation. Whether it is a little house nestling on the hill-banks of the Hudson, a villa along the shores of Long Island, a cottage in the Catskill country or a California bungalow, the cement house will prove itself just right by reason of the fact it is conformable to practically any architectural idea; which cannot be said of the house of wood or stone. That is not to say that any one of these types in its proper environment must give way to the cement house; but the fact remains that the cement house is peculiarly universal in its adaptability to varied localities.

Another reason may be advanced for choosing the cement house when determining what sort of a house one will build; that is the relation of cement architecture to the possibilities of harmonious outbuildings. How often we come upon an unhappy combination of adjacent buildings, a brick house, perhaps, that has a frame stable connected with stone walls, while the walks are laid with con-
crete. Lack of harmony of this sort is disappearing, fortunately, and one may hope that within a very few years home builders will give more thought to the matter of a predominating style throughout all the buildings that form adjuncts to the home. If one’s choice of a building style happily fall upon the cement house the architect will have the satisfaction of knowing that he can evolve a series of buildings coördinate in architectural beauty, to be arrived at through simplicity of form, line and material, an accomplishment that will lend much to the endearing qualities of true homefulness in one’s house through the relation of its component parts to its site and to one another.

Again, the cement house forms an unusually strong ground for the offset of color notes, even in half-timber construction; vines and flowers, or the greens of foliage against its neutral tints are effective, and the tints may run from cool to warm grays through browns to pale yellows and even white, so varied are the color possibilities with the stucco or cement houses. There is hardly a lovelier setting in the world for a garden front in summer than the house-wall of stucco, or for the gorgeous tints of autumn foliage or the brown branches and tree trunks of winter time.

Because of the kinship of every cement house to its Italian cousin, the plastered exterior walls of a house of concrete, of brick, of wood or of stone finds an ideal attribute to itself in pergola or trellis and further endears it to everyone who loves a garden as everyone ought. In time, too, the cement house exerts an influence upon its surroundings. There is something about its neat trimness that leads one to insist gently upon order throughout the premises. Your wooden house does more than invite outdoor informality, for it often leads you to forget the disorder of a lawn, as a stone house often deludes one about the romance of ruin. A cement house, however, is a faithful monitor, and actually comes to the point of making one strive for the happiness of keeping up the yard and garden as both ought to be kept up with enthusiasm by every home builder.

Of course the matter of the supposed greater cost of a cement house over one of any other sort suggests itself in the beginning. However, the time has passed in America when, all things taken into consideration, the wooden house may be said to be the cheapest finally. It is true that a wooden frame house, if shingled or clapboarded, may cost considerably less than a house of the same sort with a cement exterior of plastering over galvanized iron-wire lath. However, this difference in cost would stretch a very short distance
A BUNGALOW TYPE OF CEMENT ARCHITECTURE ADAPTED TO
THE BLEAK EDGE OF A SEASHORE HILLSIDE, THE BUILD-
ING HAS THE EFFECT OF CROUCHING TO THE GROUND.

A SECOND EXAMPLE OF CEMENT ARCHITECTURE AT THE SEA-
SHORE, VERY SEVERE AND DIGNIFIED, AN ORNAMENTAL
EFFECT GAINED FROM PLACING AND TYPE OF WINDOWS.
A CEMENT HOUSE ESPECIALLY PLANNED TO CROWN A SLOPING HILL: INTERESTING COMBINATION OF CEMENT AND TILE ROOF: OWNED BY MR. ROBERT C. BRIDGE, NANAPASHAMET, MASS.

LOW COTTAGE EFFECT IN CEMENT HOUSE SUITED TO RURAL LANDSCAPE: OWNED BY MR. JOSEPH F. WALLER, YONKERS, N. Y.
CEMENT HOUSE WITH GOOD ROOF LINES AND MOST UNUSUAL AND INTERESTING ARRANGEMENT OF GROUPS OF WINDOWS: A DESIGN ESPECIALLY SUITED TO LOW-LYING COUNTRY.

A TYPE OF WESTERN CEMENT ARCHITECTURE, INTENDED FOR A NARROW PLOT IN TOWN OR VILLAGE.
A MORE ELABORATE EFFECT IN CEMENT ARCHITECTURE, SHOWING HARMONIOUS OUTBUILDINGS OF SAME MATERIAL: OWNED BY MRS. R. C. F. COMBES, WOODMERE, L. I.

THE ADAPTATION OF CEMENT TO MODIFIED COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE, MOST EFFECTIVE WITH AMPLE GROUNDS FURNISHING A GREEN BACKGROUND.
PLACE OF THE CEMENT HOUSE IN OUR ARCHITECTURE

toward the repairs and upkeep which wooden houses almost invariably require. Again, second-hand materials, such as old bricks supplied by wreckers, can be used for walls of stucco houses at a greatly reduced cost for materials. Finally the fact that the concrete, hollow tile, or plastered brick houses form a type of the cement house that is practically fireproof should go a long way in deciding one’s choice of plans for a house of this sort.

THE question of roofing a cement house may be answered in many ways, for there is no roofing material that is unsuitable for the sort of a cement house with which it will harmonize. The cement houses in America will be found with shingles, tile, metal, slate and even with thatched roofs. Of course, one looks oftenest for the shingled roof in bungalow and cottage architecture, for tile in houses along Italian lines and for the thatched roof in cement houses intended for rural districts, such as the farmhouses now being built upon Eastern estates. Indeed, there is nothing lovelier in cement construction than one of these picturesque farmhouses with plastered walls and thatched roofing. This thatched effect may also be obtained with other materials, designed to follow the bundled lines of European roofs. This is to be seen in the accompanying reproduction of the cement cottage of Mr. Robert C. Bridge, Nanapashemet, Massachusetts, designed by Messrs. Bacon and Hill, architects. This is one of the most attractive cottages in the country, on original lines from sill to chimney-top, and yet conceived with an elegant simplicity of line that frees it from anything that might savor of the bizarre.

The bungalow of Mr. Joseph F. Waller, at Yonkers, New York, here illustrated, is one of the most successful small cement houses in the country, and it suggests what one might do upon a moderate outlay. In this bungalow note the charming informality with which the cement walk approaching it turns to the left instead of meeting the house at a formal angle-line with the door. The house of Mrs. R. C. F. Combes at Woodmere, Long Island, is a fine example of a shingle-roofed cement house suited to a town or suburban site. The outbuildings at the rear are in full harmony with its design.

The photographic reproductions accompanying this article have been chosen by THE CRAFTSMAN with reference to their illustrating both the Craftsman idea of house building and the various types of cement houses—concrete, tile, plaster on metal lath, and plaster on wood, and also with reference to their relation to building sites.