

come and entreat her forgiveness. Here the letter came to an abrupt conclusion, no doubt owing to the collision, and as it commenced 'My own sweet love,' and was minus a signature, it was impossible to make out the writer or the person to whom written. I kept it, nevertheless, placing it inside my pocket-book, and there it has been ever since, until to-day George's account of Miss Western reminded me of its existence. As good luck would have it, after you went up to Effie this evening, Miss Western gave me a lead by asking—

"You were on the *Calabria* the night of the collision, weren't you?"

"On that hint I spake. I could not say that I remembered having seen Mr. Berners, but I mentioned my letter, saying how I had shown it to everyone who had been on board the *Calabria* that I had met with, and with her permission I would show it to her. She acquiesced at once, and I thereupon produced it. The effect on her was magical. No sooner had she scanned the handwriting than she burst into a passion of tears, put both her hands into mine, and then, clasping the precious document, flew into the house with it. That was about ten minutes ago. Am I not right? Won't she be a different creature to-morrow?"

"Oh, Fred, dear Fred! how delightful! You have cured her, I feel sure."

"I say, Mary, don't run away in such a hurry. I

wonder if you and old George have found out how very pretty she is."

But I did not stop to listen to him. I ran to Clare's room.

"Clare, dear, let me in," I cried. The door was thrown open, and there stood Clare, a perfectly transformed creature. Her eyes were red with weeping, but the stony despair had melted out of them, to be replaced by a sweet, tender smile that was reflected round her mouth.

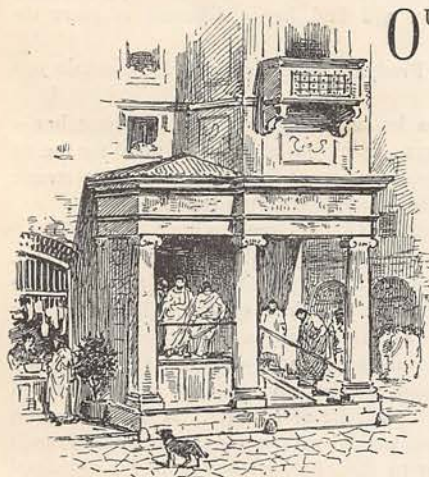
"Oh, Mrs. Herbert!" she cried incoherently. "He forgave me. He sent me a message—a letter. Oh! such a letter. Ah, my dear, my dear! I do not feel now as if I had killed him," and with that Clare threw her arms round my neck and gave me at least half a dozen hearty kisses, before once more bursting into a flood of blessed, health-giving tears.

\* \* \* \* \*

Three years and a half have passed away since that July evening, and Fred and Clare have been man and wife now for a year. Only the other day Fred assured me that he did not know what Clare's temper may have been formerly, but that since he had married her he had found her the sweetest-tempered woman he had ever met with, "and considering that we have been travelling and roughing it together for six months," he wound up by saying, "I ought to know."

## THE STORY OF THE DWELLING-HOUSE.

BY EDWIN GOADBY.



ROMAN PORTICO.

OUR common a bodes have a wonderful history, carrying us back to the dawn of time. The wandering tent-dweller is struck dumb with astonishment in any huge city, and the madic life begets a movable residence; the fixed residence implies the higher state—food and labour close at hand, a settled social life, the cultivation of the arts.

The tent is thus the primitive dwelling. It was made of the skins of wild animals, or of the animals of the flocks fed by the nomads, or of branches of trees in lands covered with wood. In nearly all countries of the world the earliest buildings are cone-shaped or round. The square tent is a great advance, wherever it be found, and it invariably leads to the square building, be it of timber or of stone, or of sun-dried or fire-dried brick. In Arabia large tents are called *baiton* or houses. The tent of the Red Indian does not materially differ from the tent of the Central Asian tribes, and the kraal of the South African savage is built on much the same lines as were the huts of the poor under the huge palaces of Thebes, and the stone bee-hive dwellings of the Pelasgians and the ancient Britons.

The round corn-stacks of the northern parts of these islands preserve for us the type of the ancient dwelling-house; and when we build round summer-houses in our garden, for pleasure, we unconsciously revert to the style of structure our ruder ancestors erected, as a necessity, to shelter them from the elements. The quadrangular hay-stack, which is more

city-born traveller marvels when he sees the auls, or tent-villages, of the Kirghis. The city has its fixed houses, its long lines of streets, its tramping people, its noisy wheel-traffic. The nomads of the Oxus move their auls from place to place at certain periods, and the desert-paths are their unresounding streets, the wells and pastures their centres of attraction. No-

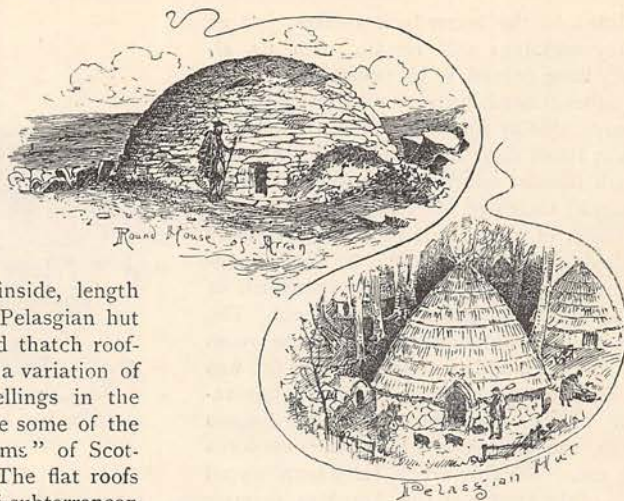


common in Southern England, is a type of the house that succeeded the cone tent and hut, the forerunner of our more modern dwelling.

The bee-hive house is found in the Hebrides, in Wales, and in Ireland. It suggests its origin distinctly enough. The round house of Arran is a fine specimen of pre-Christian times: walls four feet thick, doorway three feet high, narrowing inside, length nineteen feet, height eight feet. The Pelasgian hut was a compound of stones and wood and thatch roofing. The half-underground dwelling is a variation of the more primitive form. Tartar dwellings in the Merv oasis are still underground, as are some of the houses of Central Armenia. The "weems" of Scotland are very much of this character. The flat roofs of the East are remnants of this semi-subterranean building. People sat on their housetops to gossip, as they still do on a summer's evening in Armenia.

The permanent residence begins with the half-nomads, as we see amongst the Yomuds. There is an enclosure, with its inner wall as the line from which the rude structure projects. The next stage is to build a wooden house of one room, large enough for the family. This one room appears in all countries, eastward and westward. In the East it is an enclosure, with separate divisions about it, and open to the sky in the centre. In the West it is covered over and used in common.

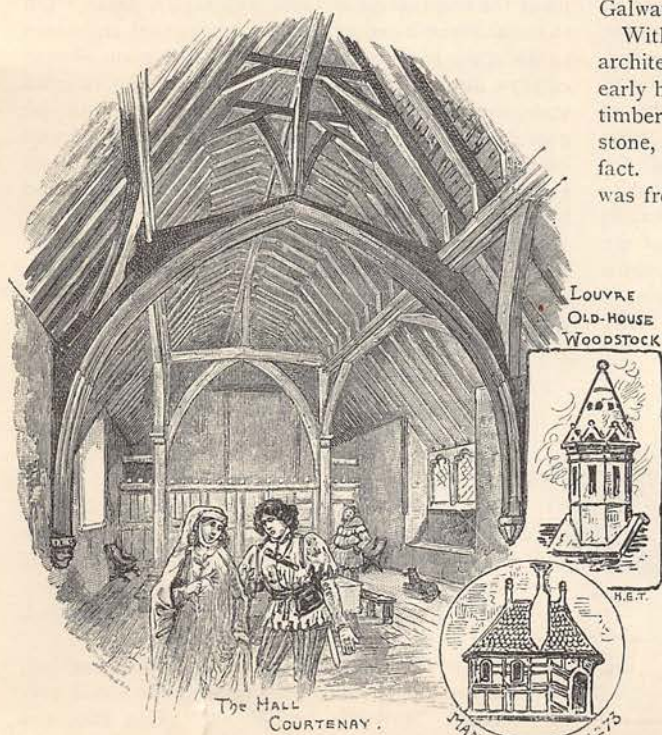
The fixed residence was affected by occupation as



well as surroundings. Caves sheltered the hunters of wild beasts. Nottingham, with its sandstone, was in the midst of a densely wooded district, and the old British name for it was "the City of Caves." There were also caves by the seashore for the fisher-folk. The lake-dwellers were also fisher-folk, and there is a resemblance in their dwellings, whether we find their remains in Italy, Switzerland, Sweden, or Ireland. They were built upon piles, and some were round, like the primitive hut, whilst others were quadrangular. The Irish people call these dwellings crannōges; and some of them were occupied until quite modern times: Crannough Macknavin, in County Galway, being destroyed by the English in 1610.

Without entangling the reader in the thickets of an architectural controversy, it may be as well to say that early houses establish the fact that, in most countries, timber structures, if at all elaborate, usually preceded stone, leaving behind them a distinct record of the fact. Even where stone was abundant and masonry was freely employed, we get imitations of wood or of reeds. The stone columns resembled the wooden posts, and squareness follows in doorways, windows, and roofs. In China, the transition from the tent to the dwelling-house has been stereotyped, but in the main it is the square tent, not the round one. The porticoes are of wood, and the eave-plates rest on struts of curved timber to imitate the forked post of a tree. Chinese architecture, indeed, is interesting, as fixing for us the same stage of the dwelling-house, with climatic variations, that we see still in Sweden and Norway, where wood dwellings are the rule outside the towns. The charming watering-place of Södertilje, in Sweden, shows of what grace and lightness wooden houses are capable, without the colour and fantastic adornments common in China.

The single-room dwelling was common with the poor long after it had





been modified in the better-built houses, just as single-storey buildings still remain with us, although they have ceased to be common. To-day we see timber-framed houses, with overhanging upper storeys, side by side with modern mansions, as in Saxon times their huts and halls were side by side with Roman houses, which were called by terms to signify their age.

The division of the single room was probably accomplished, in the first instance, by skins, hanging on wooden posts, to form an apartment of privacy, and for the women of the household. The early Saxon chiefs and kings lived in one room with their retainers, and slept there. The fire was made in the centre, and the more familiar retainers, or "hearth-companions," as the Saxons called them, sat and slept with their over-lords about the fire. To this origin have been traced the Counts of the Palace of the Frankish sovereigns. The poor also sat and slept round the fire in their humbler dwellings, and we owe our familiar phrases, "the family circle," "the social circle," a "circle of acquaintances," to this custom. At present we are at a period of half-circles. Westminster Hall and the College Halls of the English Universities are survivals of the older English hall. Solomon's house "of the forest of Lebanon" (1 Kings vii. 2) was about the size of Westminster Hall.

The next stage was the construction of a special chamber for privacy, called the *solar*. This was at the end of the hall, and above the cellar. The Romans called the chief room the *aula*, the Saxons called it the *heall*. Halls are often mentioned in "Domesday Book" as attached to manors, from which the use of the term hall, to signify the chief mansion in a place, undoubtedly arose. But, as commerce increased, retainers diminished, old customs lost their force, and domestic life encroached upon the public life of the rich. Bed-chambers were provided, the solar was enlarged into the withdrawing-room, and the main hall was reduced in size and subordinated to the group. The plain-timbered roof of an old hall is well seen in the hall of Courtenay, Berkshire, of the fourteenth century, as its rapidly growing competitor may be found figured on a seal of 1273, showing a two-storeyed house, with bed-chambers above. Many of our country mansions retain the main hall as the



Round  
Lock-up  
at Shenley.

centre of the building, and sometimes it has been left intact at the side.

The single hall was often approached by a flight of steps, and steps also led up from it to the solar, or private apartment. The street-projecting steps are of Roman origin. Roman houses had steps and a portico, beneath which a great man's clients or dependents used to wait. The effect of Roman architecture upon the English dwelling-house is visible in the pillared porch and steps, and the steps projecting on to the pavement, common in the older English towns, even when the porch had been abandoned as unsuited to ordinary dwellings. As the Roman *ædiles* compelled the removal of the steps and porches as obstructions, so modern public bodies have had to insist upon the contraction of these awkward features. Up to the thirteenth century, however, external staircases to the upper rooms were the rule. The manor-house of 1273, already referred to, had evidently an internal staircase. We need not trouble ourselves with the combination structures of wood and rubble, wood and brick, and wood and stone—they are all transitional types; nor yet with Gothic buildings or half-fortified houses.

Building in storeys is not English. But the early builders in wood must have had an idea of it, because the Sagas picture Thor's house as consisting of 540 floors! Old French châteaux were only two-roomed, and more than one family in a house was unknown until the sixteenth century. The houseless folk lodged in hostleries, chapters, and convents, where hired rooms could be had. The "flat" system is foreign. The term "English quarter," in many Continental towns, is given to houses each of which contains a single family. Modern storeys are said to have originated in Venice, where ground was scarce, and the great mansions were first seen. They passed westward through France to England, but at what precise time is unknown.

The Venetian mansion had its great hall above the main entrance, with the usual portraits, memorials, and buffets. This floor was called the *piano nobile*. It is now known as



LAKE DWELLINGS.



the *appartamento signorile*, as visitors know by the price usually asked for it. The Scotch have derived the "flat" system, now so increasing amongst us, from the French. The plan of building houses in wings is Italian.

It is necessary to return to the great hall. When the fire was on an open hearth in the centre, the smoke had to escape as best it could. Louvers, or louveres, were provided in the roof, a kind of pinnacle still seen in Westminster Hall. Only the finer buildings were so accommodated, however, and probably the Louvre in Paris owes its name to its handsome smoke-turrets. Most private houses had these louveres until the beginning of the fifteenth century. Chaucer, speaking of a widow, says, "Full sooty was her house and eke her hall."

The fireplace and the chimney were of Norman invention. The Roman houses did not have them in 1368, for there is an account of a Prince of Padua taking a mason from Padua to make a chimney at his inn, "because in the city of Rome they did not then use chimneys, and all lighted the fire in the middle of the house on the floor."

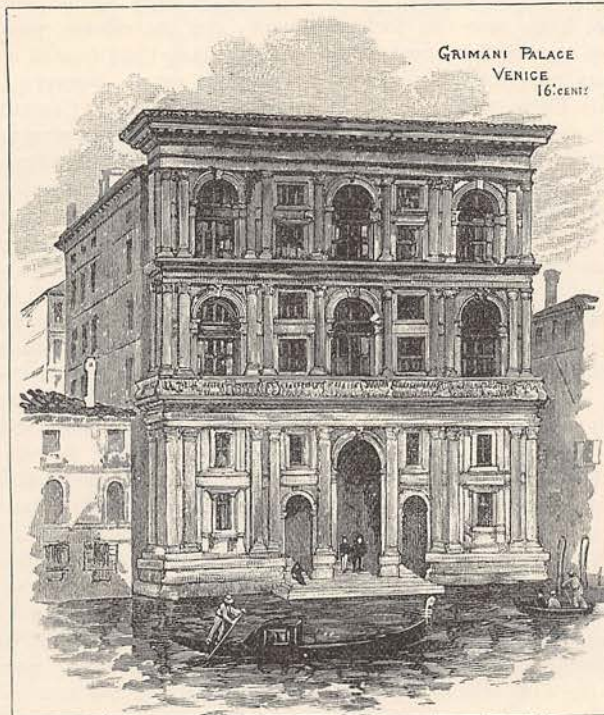
King John's house at Sholing, near Southampton, had a fine Norman fireplace, dating from 1130; there was also one in Rochester Castle of the same date; a third in a vaulted building in Simnel Street, Southampton; and a fourth at Netley Abbey, 1233. Chimney-stacks came in with bricks, and before the hall had its fireplace it was built in the solar.

The roofs of houses were originally built either dome-shaped or with the false arch, produced by narrowing-up slabs of stone or timber. Thatch and reeds were common until the seventeenth century where tiles could not be made or slates were unknown. The "roof-tree" was exposed, blackened with smoke, and usually built of English oak. Ceilings were not common in the thirteenth century, though they became richly ornamented in the fifteenth. The oldest form of ceiling was to cover the brick, timber, and stone walls of rooms. Arras was not used in England for any other purpose than dividing a large room into other rooms until after the advent and comparative

disuse of wainscoting, which was common in the better houses at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

At the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century, although glass had long been used for palaces and churches, the ordinary dwelling-house had wooden shutters for its windows, or lattices, or iron bars. The floors had been strewn with rushes in winter, and grass in summer. Pine branches for door-mats are still used in Norway. The carpet is Eastern: it is a

remnant of tent life. On the Oxus, Mac Gahan has said, "Each family has a different pattern which is handed down from generation to generation as a heirloom without undergoing the slightest change. The colours are principally red and white, interspersed with small patches of green and brown, and are really very pretty as well as durable." Scottish tribal plaids no doubt represent a not unlike connection with their family life. The first carpets that came to England were introduced by Eleanor of Castile and the Spanish Embassy. Flooring tiles came from



Flanders, and in Henry VIII's time were called Flaundrestyll.

The dwelling-house, in fine, is a quotation from many centuries. It is silent history, and its significance needs interpretation. To Englishmen it speaks, through the interpreter, of British, Roman, Saxon, Norman, and Eastern elements. It is a record of the invasions we have suffered, of our kinship with far Eastern races, of our increasing needs, of our growth in domesticity, wealth, and comfort. A round lock-up in a country village—now very rare—carries us back to British houses; and though we have no princely Roman villas left, we have only to look around to note everywhere the effects the Romans have left behind them. The Saxon halls are not uncommon; Norman castles remain; our home life is a witness of our far Eastern descent. The poet sings what is as true of the tent as it is of the house of timber or of stone—

"Be it ever so humble,  
There's no place like home."