

THE HOUSE OF A THOUSAND YEARS.

Living In Concrete Houses.

In view of the housing problem, which is so acute all over the world at the present time, the following article makes interesting reading. It is from "Concrete," one of America's best advocates for concrete construction. Mr. Andrews, the writer of the article, says: "Ten years ago I had the building bee in my bonnet so bad that I was going around in circles from one architect's office to another. But I wanted more than a mere house for the moment—I wanted something as permanent and durable as time itself, something that would last for a thousand years, and still be cold-proof, heat-proof, wind-proof, earthquake-proof, rat-proof, and all the other proofs!

"Wood construction was out of the question. I didn't like brick or stone, hollow tile was then little known, and steel would rust. Finally, I found an architect who believed in reinforced concrete with all his soul. He talked it, dreamed of it, wrote about it, and welcomed me like a long-lost brother. His name was Oliver Randolph Parry.

"Well, I took a long breath—and let him go ahead. And the result is shown in the accompanying illustrations.

"I lived in that blessed house eight happy years, and would have been there yet if business and family reasons had not called me away. The present owner likes it as well, I believe, as we did, and in the community the building is known as 'the white house.'

"When the wind blows it never shakes nor even trembles. In summer it is very cool, and in winter very warm. No rat or mouse ever gained entrance through its walls. It has never been damp in the slightest degree, nor has it cracked, chipped, crumbled or done any of the sad things that were predicted for it by various solicitous friends and neighbours. Once in two years I gave the outside walls a coat of ordinary whitewash—the kind used on lighthouses. A painter applied it with a big brush, quickly, and the bill each time I remember was £5. White? It was the whitest white you ever saw! With the green shingles and the green vines for contrast, it made a picture worth looking at.

"This is not the place for a technical description of the construction details, so I shall give only a few brief general statements. The pictures plainly show the method of construction, and how the forms were raised from time to time as the work went on. The concrete was poured by hand in a slow, primitive

way that would be much improved upon nowadays; and, when the forms were raised in a day or so, the not-yet-hard wall was dampened and rubbed down with a wooden float, giving it a rough sand finish, and obliterating all board marks. When the walls were done the house was a solid monolithic mass



The "House of a Thousand Years."

from the cellar to the roof, tied together with vertical steel rods and horizontal wires embedded in the concrete.

The last thing was a waterproofing compound brushed into the outer surface when the walls were finished. They were then ready for the whitewash a little later. On the inside of the walls furring strips were placed, and the lathing was fastened to these, thus leaving a half-inch air space between wall and plaster—which greatly added to the dryness and warmth of the house. The walls are 12in. thick from basement to first floor, 8in. thick from