

The Chronicle

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New Building Material.

Buildings of a variety of classes, from colleges to factories are now being built of a new kind of concrete, which is said to resist the weather and fire better even than stone. The concrete is run into moulds from 2 feet long, 2 feet wide and the same depth, or larger or smaller as is desired. They are hollow and have a surface like finely dressed stone, or good brick. At a trifling extra expense ornamental devices may be introduced on the surface. The concrete may be used entirely, or it may be supplemented by steel binders, or girders. There have been a number of attractive looking residences built of this new material, which is much cheaper than brick, and is declared to be absolutely incapable of injury by any ordinary fire. The use of it is expected to affect insurance rates.

Eight Hours a Day.

The International Typographical Union stands pledged to establish the eight-hour day in all book and job printing offices on January 1, next. In the 14th and 15th centuries a day's labour consisted of 8 hours, but conditions were then very different to those now prevailing. In the first place there was no artificial light for use in winter, so that 8 hours was the length of available time for work during winter months. Then the great mass of the workers had a plot of land to cultivate, as an Act of Parliament was for some time in force requiring every cottage built to have a lot of land attached, so that the men could use their time before and after the hours they were serving a master in cultivating their home gardens. Documents are still in existence showing that carpenters and masons used to sell farm produce. Dwellings occupied by the labouring classes were commonly held under a "labour-rents" agreement, so that other work had to be done when the 8 hours had expired. The whole labouring class were slowly emerging from a state of serfdom as the growth of towns favoured

their freedom. The conditions of labour, both social and economic, were so widely different in those early times from any now existing that no bases exist for comparisons, and the plea that 8 hours used to constitute a day's work is quite irrelevant to any issue to-day.

Why Credit a Rival's Disparaging Yarns?

It seems to have been a source of great amusement to English manufacturers to hear the expressions of surprise uttered by the Canadian manufacturers when visiting British factories. They were amazed to find not only the mechanical equipments in England thoroughly up to date, but, in some cases, superior to anything found on this continent. They had swallowed the slanderous tales of Americans whose interest it is to disparage British industries, who systematically described the British manufacturer as too stupid to use the best modern machinery. The Montreal representative of the Manufacturers' Association says: "Any one who says Great Britain is at all behind the times so far as manufacturing is concerned speaks from lack of knowledge." But why did any Canadian allow himself to be so misled when the facts were so readily ascertainable?

New York Fire Premiums 1st half of 1905.

The total fire insurance premiums collected in New York in the first half of this year amounted to:

Local companies.....	\$4,106,571
Foreign companies.....	3,453,399
Agency companies.....	3,639,687
Total.....	\$11,199,657

In same period 1904, the amount was \$11,318,955. The Canadian and British companies' premiums are reported as follows for 1st half of 1904 and 1905: