

# what they are doing

## RELATIVE COST OF BUILDING MATERIALS

The report of the Committee on Fire Protection of the Boston Chamber of Commerce included some very interesting figures on the comparative cost of frame and brick construction for dwelling houses. The conclusion was that the slightly greater cost of brick, which averages under 10 per cent more than frame, was more than offset in a few years by the lesser cost of maintenance and insurance and by the greater comfort and durability of the structure. The report says that when lumber was cheap and brick was more expensive than now, the idea became general that the cost of brick as compared with frame was almost prohibitive, and this continues, although the conditions have changed so radically that the cost is now little more and the ultimate cost is less.

The purpose of the investigation was to encourage the use of brick and non-combustible interior construction for the purposes of fire prevention, and this form of building was very strongly urged by the report. Bona fide bids were secured from five different contractors of good reputation on the cost of the construction of dwellings of brick, wood, cement and hollow blocks, the houses to be the same in every particular except the outer walls. Bids were secured on a modern eight-room house, of good design and excellent arrangement, such as is frequently built in and about large cities, and on these the bids of the five contractors varied comparatively little, and so the average was taken as a fair test of the practical cost, the contractors including their profits in all cases. The average bid for the various types was as follows, the second column showing the percentage of excess cost of each type over the clapboard type:

|                              |            |      |
|------------------------------|------------|------|
| Clapboard                    | \$6,759.95 | 0.0  |
| Shingle                      | 6,868.80   | 1.6  |
| 10-inch brick wall, hollow   | 7,372.48   | 9.1  |
| 12-inch brick wall, solid    | 7,641.00   | 13.0 |
| Stucco on hollow block       | 7,187.65   | 6.3  |
| Brick veneer on hollow block | 7,483.16   | 10.7 |
| Stucco on frame              | 6,952.90   | 2.9  |
| Brick veneer on boarding     | 7,226.44   | 6.9  |
| Brick veneer on studding     | 7,153.98   | 5.8  |

The committee corresponded with contractors in various parts of the country in making up its report, and found from them that brick buildings were commonly estimated to cost 10 per cent more than frame, while brick veneered buildings could be put up in many sections for 5 per cent more than the cost of frame buildings, the difference in cost being usually more than offset by the lessened insurance premium. In the same way estimates were secured on annual cost of maintenance, including depreciation, for frame and brick dwellings, and it was found that the frame dwellings cost 26 per cent more for maintenance and depreciation than the brick dwellings.

## RETIRING FROM SERVICE

Mr. William B. Jones, who, for nearly fourteen years, has been Secretary of the Albany, N. Y., Chamber of Commerce, has, on account of poor health, tendered his resignation, the same to take effect on June 1st. For the present Mr. Jones will make his home at Castleton-on-the-Hudson, N. Y., and will take a rest before entering a new and possibly less strenuous field of work.

Mr. Jones has the reputation of being one of the most active as well as progressive secretaries in the country and is considered an authority on questions pertaining to waterway development. He has been connected with the National Rivers and Harbors Congress ever since its organization, serving as Vice-President and later as one of the directors of that organization. He is also officially connected with the New York State Waterways Association and the Atlantic Deeper Waterways Association.

## EGYPT'S DEBT TO THE ENGINEER

The Assouan Dam and other irrigation works in Egypt have cost about \$53,000,000; but the increase in the value of land in middle and lower Egypt and the Fayoum Provinces has been from \$955,000,000 to \$2,440,000,000. The total rent of this land has risen from \$82,000,000 to \$190,000,000. This is what the Engineer has done for Egypt in less than two decades.

—Scientific American.



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