

MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS, CONTRACTORS AND MATERIALS

**BUILDING CONSTRUCTION UNDER DIFFICULTIES.**

The limited amount of street space accorded to contractors by the municipal authorities for buildings under construction has long been a serious embarrassment to contractors and a considerable impediment to rapid building construction, says the American Contractor. Not that the public should be called upon to give up any more space than at present; we were merely considering the matter from the contractor's standpoint.

The great loss in rents which is sustained by the owner during the period of construction is another serious matter which the enterprising contractor is called upon to overcome. There is almost always a stipulation in the building contract that the completed structure shall be turned over to the proprietor on a specified day, and for failure to complete the work on the day named, a daily forfeit is exacted, which is to reimburse the owner for loss of rent during the additional time required to complete the structure.

As an incentive to rapid work a bonus is frequently offered the contractor for every day saved from the allotted time allowed for the execution of the contract. This is as it should be. How some of our contractors manage to do such good work in such short time allotted is often a mystery.

It is a well-known fact that many wealthy owners of extremely valuable business property in our large cities refrain from replacing their out of date buildings with substantial modern structures simply because of the great financial sacrifice entailed by the loss of rents. Modern methods of rapid building construction are designed to overcome such embarrassments. The period involved in the construction of a building, especially if it be a large one, is one of the most important questions which enters into the whole problem of building construction. To erect a million dollar office building in eight months, which it formerly required sixteen months to build is frequently a saving in rents of \$30,000 to \$40,000.

The subject of night work on large buildings has received a great deal of attention of late. The constantly decreasing cost of electric light service, the ease with which such illumination can be adjusted to meet the requirements of artisans, the disposition of mechanics to work beyond hours where there is pecuniary inducement to do so, and the recent invention of perfected machinery whereby a vast amount of heavy manual labor is avoided, are considerations which are contributing to make nightwork on a certain class of business buildings most feasible.

We have watched with much amusement the serious matter-of-fact way in which certain union organizations in the building trades pass resolutions and frame cast-iron rules in condemnation of night work, and later have watched them utterly ignore these fine resolutions and by-laws where the contractor, pinched for

time and goaded by the impatient owner, offers his union men a bonus voluntarily for their services after hours.

The old adage reads: "Where there's a will there's a way." A newly coined phrase might read: "Where there's cash all things are possible," too much so sometimes. We are of opinion that during the coming season there will be considerable night work, and that work during all of the twenty-four hours will be a conspicuous feature where the exigencies of the occasion demand that the work be "rushed."

Non-inflammable paint can be made as follows:—To a gallon of a mixture of equal parts of lime-water and vinegar, one half pound of salts, one quarter-pound of alum, and one quarter pound of

white vitriol are added, each in the form of a powder. The mixture is then boiled. One gallon of linseed oil or drying oil of any other convenient sort is added and the boiling repeated. After the addition of one gallon of crude petroleum the mixture is once more heated to the boiling point and is then ready.

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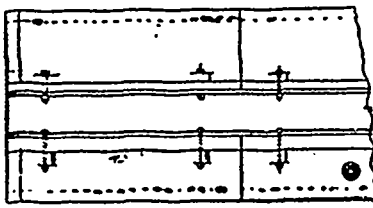
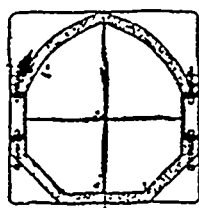
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