

CONTRACTS OPEN.

WIARTON, ONT.—Steps are to be taken to establish a high school.

VALLEYFIELD, QUE.—A new Roman Catholic school house is to be erected here.

NANAIMO, B.C.—A syndicate recently formed will erect a number of fine residences overlooking the town.

KINGSTON, ONT.—Plans for the new Y.M.C.A. have been prepared, but have not yet been accepted.

WATERLOO, ONT.—Forty acres have been purchased as the site for a town park, and the improvement of the same will be commenced in the spring.

STRATFORD, ONT.—An improved fire alarm system is felt to be a necessity. The Bell Telephone Co. have made proposals to the council in connection with the matter.

WEST TORONTO JUNCTION.—Preparations are being steadily pushed forward for the construction of a system of water works, which it is estimated will cost nearly a quarter of a million dollars.

NIAGARA FALLS, ONT.—Application will be made next session of the Dominion Parliament for an Act to incorporate the Whirlpool Bridge Company, to construct an iron or steel bridge across the Niagara river, below the Whirlpool bridge, to be used only for the purposes of an electric or steam railway.

FORT ERIE, ONT.—Applications will be made at the next session of the Dominion Parliament for an Act to incorporate the Buffalo and Fort Erie Bridge Company, empowering the company to construct a suspension bridge across the Niagara river from Buffalo to Fort Erie, for foot, carriage and railway traffic.

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Major-General Twigge has had plans prepared for a large residence to be built on Georgia street. Construction will begin on his return from England.—Messrs. S. G. Hammersley, of this city, acting in conjunction with a Glasgow firm, proposes to construct here an extensive graving dock and ship yards.

WINNIPEG, MAN.—Mr. Mitchell, Chairman of the Sites and Building Committee of the Public School Board, is at present on a visit to Ontario with the object of gaining information to be utilized in the erection of new schools.—The by-law authorizing the purchase of a site and erection of buildings for an annual exhibition has carried.

TORONTO, ONT.—At a meeting of the Athenaeum Club held a few evenings ago it was resolved to purchase land and erect thereon a club house, a committee being appointed for that purpose. It is proposed to expend about \$30,000.—An effort is being made to raise \$18,000 for the erection of additions to the Victoria Industrial School for boys.

MONTREAL, QUE.—The City Surveyor has been instructed to prepare plans for a new street railway system to Point St. Charles, and a memo of the conditions upon which a franchise for the same will be granted.—The Protestant Board of School Commissioners has instructed Mr. A. Hutchison, architect, to prepare plans for a new high school building to contain about 40 class rooms.

VICTORIA, B.C.—Tenders will be invited early in January for the erection of a five-story business block for the Douglas estate from plans prepared by Mr. T. C. Sorby, architect. The estimated cost of the work is \$150,000.—Tenders will shortly be invited for the erection of the proposed new Christ Church Cathedral. Subscriptions to the amount of \$40,000 have been received towards carrying out the proposed undertaking.—The Union Pacific Railway are said to have purchased several water lots with the intention of erecting thereon wharves and warehouses.

NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C.—Mr. G. W. Grant is preparing plans for a business block to be erect-

ed at the corner of Agnes and Mary streets, for Mr. A. M. Herring. He has also prepared plans for the same gentleman for terrace of ten dwellings.—Sir Matthew Bailey Begbie is having plans prepared for a large business block to be erected at the corner of Columbia, McKenzie and Front sts.—It is rumoured also that a local syndicate will in the spring erect a business block which will cover the greater part of the property lying between Lorne, Clarkson, McKenzie and Columbia streets.

CONTRACTS AWARDED.

KINGSTON, ONT.—The contract for the caisson at the dry docks has been awarded to the Dominion Bridge Company, Montreal.

WALKERVILLE, ONT.—The Globe Furniture Co., of Walkerville, have been awarded the contract for the church furniture in the new Disciples church, Cecil street, Toronto, for \$1,285.

VICTORIA, B. C.—The Sewerage Commissioners have awarded the contract for the construction of a sewerage system to McBean & Co., of San Francisco, the lowest tenderers. The amount is \$249,970. The work will be commenced in March and pushed as rapidly as possible.

BIDS.

LONDON, ONT.—The following tenders have been received for fire alarm supplies for the new ward: The Gamor Co., Louisville, Ky., \$985; H. O. Thornbury, \$555.05; Union Fire Alarm Co., New York, \$790; W. A. Brock, city, \$530.87; A. Anderson, Toronto, \$826, and \$701, according to the style of boxes; Cowan & Co., 3,000 lbs. of wire at \$4.17 per hundred pounds. The chiefs of the fire department have been asked to report on these offers.

UNIFORM RULES OF MEASUREMENT.

By V. B. GRINNELL.

It may be easy enough to talk and write about the adoption of uniform rules of measurement for painters' use, but to go to work and formulate a rule which will work well and correctly under the variety of circumstances which may confront the measurer, taking into consideration position, shape and condition of surface, is a horse of quite another color. We all agree, perhaps, that the safest way to determine the amount of surface in a job is by actual measurement, but after all that is but one short step toward finding what it is worth to paint a building. In all the systems of measurement known to the writer, a painter or contractor must depend as much upon his eye and good judgment as upon the line and pencil. One way to estimate is to get the superficial measurement of the building and reduce the whole to yards, then carefully look the job over, taking into consideration all the specifications called for, and make a general estimate of what it is worth per yard to paint the building.

The other way, for the want of a better name, we will call the cumulation rule. Get the superficial measure of the whole job (roof excepted) and reduce to yards. Then, taking the plain surface as a standard, estimate what it is worth per yard to paint the whole job. Next proceed with what we may call special measurement. Suppose the cornice measures sixty yards, and is finished with blocks, brackets and panels, and we estimate that

the cost of painting it will be three times that of the plain surface then we add two measures or one hundred and twenty yds. Say the windows and frames each measure three yards, and there are twenty of them to be cut in colors, and we estimate the cost of painting per yard double that of plain surface. Then we add one measure or sixty yards and continue with the corner boards, doors, lattice-work, etc. This is the safest rule known to me, because we measure the whole surface, reduce it all to yards, and estimate it all as plain surface. Then in the special measurements we add what we consider it worth per yard over and above the general estimate for parti-colors, brackets, panels, places difficult of access, etc.

No rule for measurement can be made by which a man of inexperience or poor judgment can safely bid on work. Measuring with a line is a mechanical operation, and the figures used only show the number of yards.

We certainly need a reformation in the matter of competing for work, but how it can be accomplished is the question.

The painter who expects to become a successful contractor must learn to do the business of contracting as well as to paint. He must necessarily study to master the business department of the trade. He must practice measuring work with the line, and take time to examine and consider the work in all its details. Is it easy to get at or hard to reach? Is the surface rough or smooth, porous or solid, plain or fancy? Are the colors to be cheap or expensive? Is the job to be plain or parti-colored? Are the blinds new or are they old with half or more of the slats stuck? Will he be bothered by carpenters and masons? Is the house empty or occupied, clean or dirty?

These and many more questions must be met and answered in his own mind after due investigation. Then he must carefully figure until he is able to bid with a certainty of making a "living" profit. The painter who fails to do this through inability or carelessness is not a safe contractor, and would do better as a journeyman under a boss, or only take such jobs as he can do by the day. As for a general rule or remedy to keep rash fellows from burning their fingers in competing for work, you might as well make a rule to keep merchants from failing in business. When you can put good business capacity into the heads of all painters you may reasonably expect to convert them all into successful contractors, and not before. Financial talent and the best artistic skill are not always combined in the same individual, and some of the most successful contractors are very poor painters.

Light red and orange yellow are the best colors to be used for the backs of shelves and bookcases when these are in white wood. It is sufficient for the first named to mix one part tumeric with thirty parts of water, adding different quantities of red to secure the other hues.