



[THIS DEPARTMENT IS DESIGNED TO FURNISH INFORMATION SUITED TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BUILDING TRADES. READERS ARE INVITED TO ASSIST IN MAKING IT AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE BY CONTRIBUTING OF THEIR EXPERIENCE, AND BY ASKING FOR PARTICULAR INFORMATION WHICH THEY MAY AT ANY TIME REQUIRE.]

Some Guides for Estimators.

THE great difficulty in preparing rules for estimating when prices are involved, is the fluctuation and local differences in cost of labor and materials. Lumber in some places may cost from one to four dollars per thousand feet more than in others, the quality being the same, and labor, while it does not vary so widely as lumber, varies enough to make it impossible to give rules from a central point, that can be relied upon with certainty at points distant from where the estimate is made, so far as the cost of labor is concerned. The local surroundings, too, have something to do with the cost of a building. In some places excavation may be done with ease, the ground being dry and easily handled. In other places the ground may be stony, tough clay, or an inflow of water may prove very troublesome. All these factors should be considered when an estimate for any particular building is being prepared. The following prices at this writing may be taken as a standard where local prices are not obtainable, or difficult to get, but, as has been repeated in these columns over and over again, the estimator should make it a point to arm himself with the actual prices current when the proposed works are to be erected:

Excavation per yard.....	\$ 20
Stone foundation, put in complete, per cord of 100 laid in the wall.....	8 00
Brick laid in the wall, per M.....	12 00
Plastering, two coats, complete, per yard.....	20
Framing timber and lumber, hemlock, per M.....	11 00
Flooring, ready to lay, per M.....	17 00
Siding, second clear, 4, 5 or 6", per M.....	16 00
Sheathing and roofing, second, per M.....	12 00
Pine shingles, per M, best 16-inch sawed.....	3 00
White cedar shingles, per M, best 16-inch sawed.....	2 50
Slate, best, laid per square (100 feet).....	8 00
Finishing lumber, pine per M.....	\$25 00
Painting, per yard, each coat.....	30 00
Carpenter's wages, per day.....	6
Mason's wages, per day.....	2 00
Laborer's wages, per day.....	3 00
Hardwood finish, with hardwood doors, extra over pine per room, about.....	1 25
	20 00

Of course something depends on the size of the room and the character of the work; on an average, however, if the estimator has no other data to work on, he may feel fairly safe in adding \$20.00 extra over pine finish for each room finished in hardwood, if the room is not above ordinary dimensions. It must be kept in mind, however, that this refers only to the bare wood-work in its natural condition, and not after the painter or polisher has gone over it. Three coat work, in paint, according to the figures, would sum up eighteen cents per yard, or 20 at the farthest, but if the work was finished up in hardwood, filled, rubbed and polished, the same surface might cost from thirty cents to one dollar and fifty cents per yard, a condition of importance to the estimator. A careful examination of the specifications

is absolutely necessary when deciding on the cost of wood finishing.

Estimating.

THE frequent enquiries that pour into the office of every architectural or building journal asking for some "short cut to estimating" proves beyond a doubt that many contractors, and would-be contractors are either unable to master a thorough and systematic method of estimating, or are too careless or indolent to enter into all the minutiae of the art—for art it is—and, although the best minds in the building world have endeavored to evolve some quick and easy method of getting at the cost of a building before its erection, nothing satisfactory has been developed. The system of cubing, estimating by comparison, and "jump estimating" have all been tried and found wanting, and the successful contractor has always found it necessary to fall back on his "first love," and estimate his proposed work item by item or by groups of similar items. The following figures, although not correct in every particular or for every locality, may serve in some instances where a hasty estimate may be required. The figures are taken from a number of works on estimating, and are given as "helps in need" where local figures are not to hand:

The price of grates finished and in place, including blower and frame.....	\$ 12 00
Outside cellar stairs, complete with doors, hinges, locks and fastenings.....	10 00
Cost of lower floors in dwellings, including joists, bridging and good quality of pine flooring, per square.....	13 00
Second floors, per square.....	12 00
Upper tier of ceiling joists, including time and all materials, per square.....	2 00
Wood copings, per foot.....	10
Chimney backs, fire clay, each.....	1 00
Flashings, 14" wide, per foot.....	9
Plain cornice, composed of matched stuff and fillet, including time, per foot, square.....	15
Siding, including studding, boarding, papering and time, per square.....	4 00
Partitions, including studding, two coats plastering, lath and time, counting both sides of wall, per square.....	6 15
Box stairs, no rail, each flight, including lumber and time.....	12 00
Stairs with rail, balusters and newel posts.....	20 00
Inside doors, with frames, locks, etc., each.....	6 00
Outside doors, with transoms, good mortise locks, bronze faced butts, each.....	11 00
Average sized windows, with medium weight glass, weights, pulleys, and all complete in place, each.....	7 50
Base in average sized room, in place.....	3 50
Shelves in pantry in ordinary style.....	4 00
Wainscoting per lineal foot, time and material, including cap.....	26
Conductor pipes and gutters per foot.....	11
Verandah, including turned posts, tin roof, foundations of posts, painted joints in floor, brackets, spindle work, three coats of paint, all complete, per running foot....	4 50
Chimneys per foot, from.....	75 to 1 00
Per foot according to size and number of flues in each shaft.	

Wooden mantels vary in price according to style finish and materials used in their construction, from \$8.00 to \$100 each, so that the estimator must have some particular style in his mind's eye when he fixes a price for