

## MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS, CONTRACTORS AND MATERIALS

## USEFUL HINTS FOR BUILDERS.

Old material should never be destroyed simply because it is old.

When putting away old stuff, see that it is protected from rain and the atmosphere.

It costs about fifteen per cent. extra to work up old material, and this fact should be borne in mind, as I have known several contractors who paid dearly for their "whistle" in estimating on working up second-hand material.

These remarks apply to woodwork only. In using old brick, stone, slate, and other miscellaneous articles, it is well to add double price for working up.

Workmen do not care to handle old material and justly so. It is ruinous to tools, baneful to handle, and very destructive to clothing.

In my experience I have always found it pays to advance the wages of workmen, skilled mechanics, while working up old material. This encouraged the men, and spurred them to better effort.

Sash frames, with sash weights, locks, and trim complete, may be taken out of old buildings that are being taken down, and preserved just as good as new by screwing slats and braces on them, which not only keep the frames square, but prevent the glass from being broken.

Doors, frames, and trims may also be kept in good order until used by taking the same precautions as in window frames.

Counters, shelving, drawers, and other fittings should be kindly dealt with. They will be wanted sooner or later.

Old scantling and joists may have all nails drawn or hammered in before piling away.

Take care of the locks, hinges, bolts, keys, and other hardware. Each individual piece represents money in a greater or lesser sum.

Sinks, wash basins, bath tubs, traps, heating appliances, grates, mantels, and hearthstones should be moved with care. They are always worth money, and may be used in many places as substitutes for more inferior fixings.

Marble mantels require the most careful handling.

Perhaps the most difficult fixings about a house to adapt a second time are the stairs. Yet I have known where a man so managed to put up new buildings that the old stairs taken from another building just suited. This may have been a "favorable accident," but the initiated reader will understand him. Seldom such accidents can occur.

Rails, balusters, and newels may be utilized much easier than stairs, as the rails may be lengthened or shortened to suit variable conditions.

Gas fixtures should be cared for, and stowed away in some dry place. They

can often be made available, and are not easily renovated if soiled or tarnished.

It is not wise to employ men who have nothing but their strength to recommend them. As a rule they are like bears, they have more strength than knowledge and lack of the latter is often an expensive consideration. Employ for taking down the work good, careful mechanics, and do not have the work "rushed through." Rushers of this sort are expensive.

Have some mercy on the workman's tools. If it can be avoided, do not work up old stuff into fine work. If not avoidable, pay the workmen something extra because of injury to tools.

## THE SEASONING OF STONE.

Stone, like lumber, requires seasoning. Stone is often spoken of as the synonym of solidity,—“as solid as a rock,” we say,

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but as a matter of fact, stone is very far from being solid. A cubic foot of the most compact granite, for instance, weighs about 164 pounds, while the cubic foot of iron weighs 464 pounds. This plainly shows that in between atoms which compose the mass of the most enduring stone there exists much space for air, moisture, etc. This seasoning of stone prior to use for building purposes has been well understood by the architects of all ages, but in the modern rush of the nineteenth century building too little attention has been paid to it. Now it enters into the calculations of every good architect.

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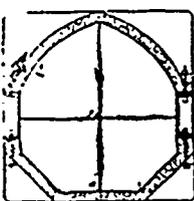
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