PLASTER SURFACES.

Stucco (that is to say plasterer's putty) must be thoroughly dry before it is painted in oil colour decoratively. It should also be left till all the free lime (which always exists in the putty) is neutralized by the action of the atmosphere. I'rom one to three years is often allowed to pass before any expensive painted work is put on new plaster.

A solution of oil of vitriol may be applied to a plaster surface, in the proportion of a quarter of a pint to two gallons of water in the case of new stucco.

It destroys the salt in plaster and acts in this way: The vitriol attacks the salt, forming hydrochloric acid gas, which evaporates, leaving on the surface of the plaster sodium hydrogen sulphate, which is easily removed by means of water.

The following rules are to be kept in mind :- That

plaster is carbonate of lime; that distemper is carbonate of lime; these agree in nature. That chalk lime putty is best to mend plaster with; failing this, Keene's cement or Parian. First object, to get a level even suction or no suction (slight suction in the case of decoration or distemper, and no suction in painting the surfaces), so as to easily renew the distemper. That a badly cracked ceiling should be lined. For painting on stucco surface in oil it must always be filled up. That Keene's cement must be painted within 12 hours of using.—W. Fourniss.

The recent fire in Toronto has not only resulted in a great increase in insurance rates in that city, but has been the means of increasing rates in all the cities throughout the country. In Winnipeg the rate has gone up \$1.00 per thousand, and in Vancouver from 15 to 50 per cent., the rates in the latter city being as follows: On all frame buildings and contents, 15 per cent.; on all brick buildings, 25 per cent.; stocks in brick buildings, 50 per cent.

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