

practically a wood front to their building, thereby increasing the fire hazard in a congested business district. It is said that the owners of this same store were also permitted to greatly exceed the maximum of undivided floor area fixed by the by-law, in consideration of having installed a system of overhead automatic sprinklers, but that no supervision was exercised by the city over the method of construction. As a result, the system is said to be very defective if not useless, owing to the fact that the piping is not arranged so as to equalize the pressure, and the overhead sprinklers are spaced ten instead of five feet apart. If these reports are correct, the owners of this and adjoining property are living in false security. It is not to the credit of the City Council that the building by-law so carefully drafted and submitted to the council by the Ontario Association of Architects several years ago should have been allowed to remain unconsidered, more particularly in view of the several disastrous fires which have occurred subsequent to its preparation. If no effort is to be made to improve the existing by-laws, it is at least the duty of the city's officials to see that present safeguards are not flagrantly violated.

BY THE WAY.

THE death is announced in Toronto of Mr. Robert Robertson, contractor, who is credited with having placed in position the weather vane of St. James' Cathedral, the height of which is upwards of 350 feet. The man who can do a job of that sort must be acknowledged to possess of level head.

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IN connection with the Bushnell Oil Company's works at Sarnia, Ont., there is a steel tank capable of holding 30,000 barrels of oil. Being desirous of removing this tank to a new location, a short distance away, the novel expedient is to be tried of making an artificial lake, across which the tank will be floated to the required position.

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As illustrating how quickly a wide-a-woke business man sometimes takes quick advantage of suddenly presented opportunities, a writer in Brick, of Chicago, tells how Mr. W. Alsip, of Grand Forks, Dakota, hearing that an attempt was being made to "corner" the price of brick at Winnipeg, gave orders that a brick-making plant which he had loaded on a train for new works he was about to establish at Fargo, should immediately be shipped to Winnipeg. As a result of this hastily formed decision Mr. Alsip has now a large brick manufactory in the capital city of our Northwest, and is assisting by his energy to promote its growth and welfare.

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As illustrating the lack of sympathy and common sense which sometimes govern the actions of trade union leaders, the American Architect tells of the following incident:—"A certain workman, who had 'gone out' with his fellows when a strike was declared, was being partly supported in his enforced idleness by his union and its sympathizers. Being a decent sort of a fellow, seemingly, he one day took a broom and swept off the pavement before the little tobacco shop of his sister, with whom he boarded, but alas! he was seen engaged in this—for a striker—degrading occupation by a walking delegate or other spy, and at once his strike money was cut off, because, forsooth, he had worked!"

PREPARING TRACING PAPER FOR ARCHITECTURAL USE.

TRACING paper may be prepared for architectural use by taking common tissue or cap paper of any size, laying each sheet on a flat surface and sponging over one side with a solution composed of 2 parts of Canada balsam and 3 parts spirits of turpentine, to which a few drops of old nut oil has been added, taking care not to smear any part of the surface of the sheet. According to one of our foreign exchanges a sponge is the best instrument for applying the mixture, which should be used warm. As each sheet is prepared, it should be hung up to dry over two cords stretched tightly and parallel about 8 inches apart, to prevent the lower edges of the paper from coming in contact. As soon as dry the sheets should be carefully rolled on straight and smooth wooden rollers about 2 inches in diameter covered with paper. The sheets are dry when no stickiness can be felt.

In order to render tracing paper more translucent so as to allow the finest lines to be seen through it, soak it in benzine by means of a cotton pad so as to thoroughly permeate the fibre. For rendering opaque drawing paper translucent so as to permit of a photographic image of a drawing done on it to be depicted on some of the highly sensitized papers, there is nothing better than to saturate it with benzine. As this rapidly evaporates the paper will resume its normal opaque appearance without showing any trace of the treatment to which it has been subjected.

Another process of rendering ordinary drawing paper transparent consists in dissolving a given quantity of castor oil in one, two or three volumes of absolute alcohol, according to the thickness of the paper, and applying it by means of a sponge. The alcohol evaporates in a few minutes, and the tracing paper thus made is dry and ready for use. The drawing can be made with lead pencil or india ink, and the oil removed from the paper by steeping it in alcohol, when the paper assumes its original condition.

COLOR IN HOUSE DECORATION.

A HOUSE decorator writes: The thermometer seems to fall about six degrees when you walk into a blue room. Yellow is an advancing color, therefore a room fitted up in yellow will appear smaller than it is. On the other hand, blue of a certain shade introduced generously into a room will give an idea of space. Red makes no difference in regard to size. Green makes very little. If a bright, sunny room gets its light from a space obtruded upon by russet colored or yellow painted houses, or else looks out upon a stretch of green grass, it should be decorated in a color very different from the shade chosen if the light comes from only an unbroken expanse of sky. Red brings out in a room whatever hint of green lurks in the composition of the other colors employed. Green needs sunlight to develop the yellow in it and make it seem cheerful. If olive or red brown be used in conjunction with mahogany furniture the effect is very different from what it would be if blue was used. Blue would develop the tawny orange lurking in the mahogany. If a ceiling is to be made higher, leave it light, that it may appear to recede. Deepening the color used on the ceiling would make it lower, an effect desirable if the room is small and the ceiling very high. Various tones of yellow are substitutes for sunlight.