STANDARDIZING OF BRICKS.

At a conference representing the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Institute of Clayworkers held in London on June 19th last, approval was given to the proposal that in future bricks should be made to a standard size as follows :

1. The length of the brick should be double the width, plus the thickness of one vertical joint.

2. Brickwork should measure four courses of bricks and four joints to a foot.

Joints should be ¼ in. thick and an extra 1/16th, making 5/16ths for the bed joints to cover irregularities in the bricks. This gives a standard length of 9¼ in. centre to centre of joints.

The bricks to be measured in the following manner :

A. Eight stretchers laid square end and splay end in contact in a straight line to measure 72 in.

B. Eight headers laid side by side, frog upwards, in a straight line to measure 35 in.

C. Eight bricks, the first brick frog downwards and then alternately frog to frog and back to back, to measure 21½ in.

A margin of 1 in. less will be allowed as to A, and ½ in. less as to B and C.

This is to apply to all classes of walling bricks, both machine and hand made.

NOTES.

White walls are the latest mania of the art decorator, says the Daily Graphic. A good many smart houses are being done with walls of white Lincrusta all the way up—the hall, staircase, and rooms all to match. The friezes and dados of the library and dining-rooms are sometimes made of old oak, and the white walls make an excellent background for oak furniture.

The Toronto Chapter of the Ontario Association of Architects and the Toronto Engineers' Club, have decided to hold every Monday joint luncheons. Formerly the members of each society met separately for this purpose. The new arrangement will no doubt promote acquaintance and sociability and enhance the general interest and success of these gatherings.

There is no branch of masonry construction which has experienced greater advances within the past few years, says Engineering Record, than Portland cement concrete. Applications for it are constantly being found in more or less new conditions, either with or without steel reinforcement. Some who formerly were apprehensive in regard to the weathering properties of its exposed surfaces have found that it may be made durable even under the most trying exposure. The best methods of its preparation have been found to make it so nearly watertight that it may easily be given that highly desirable quality for all practical purposes.

A writer in the "Yorkshire Post" observes that it is a curious fact, and one which emphasizes all the rest, that the most artistic of modern houses are those of the very wealthy and the very poor. The rich are building their own ; the poor in a few favored places, are having their's built for them, and in their different ways they are the nearest approach we have to model homes. Between these extremes comes the great wilful and inartistic middle-class, for whom there is being provided on all hands architecture that would be laughable where it not so sad. Scores of examples of it may be seen in the suburbs of any growing town —painfully modern villas of every possible degree of ugliness and inadaptability. In general they are supposed to be imitations of various "styles" of architecture, but here and there may be found a case of absolutely original eccentricity.

With the object of forming a great dam to provide a water supply for the city of San Francisco, a great section of mountain was recently torn off by 10,000 lbs. of powder, lifted several feet straight up, and then pushed bodily forward 40 ft. or 50 ft., then falling 125 ft. into the desired position. On the surface and in places through the mountain side were placed big deposits of giant powder for the purpose of shattering the mass and lifting it up. According to plans the powder when it exploded would hurl the mass straight forward, making a bridge of granite across the gorge and blocking the stream. The plans were carried out with the greatest care, and with a successful result. When the dust cleared away, it was found that the powder had dislodged a mass of rock 400 ft. up and down stream and an average of 60 ft. in height, completely bridging the canyon. The engineers estimated that the amount dislodged weighed about 150,000 tons.