

NEW BUSINESS BLOCKS RISE

Construction in All Lines Has Been Heavy During 1908, Official Permits Reaching Over \$10,000,000.

FOR the first time in the history of Portland, building operations during the past year represented an outlay of more than \$10,000,000. This remarkable showing, coming as it did on the heels of the "rich man's panic" of 1907, speaks volumes of the city's persistent progress and firm business conditions that prevented the National depression from leaving any after effects here. Portland is one of a very few cities in the United States that can show greater expenditures for buildings during 1908 than during 1907.

When Portland in 1907 was on the crest of a wave of unprecedented prosperity, permits for construction work issued by the City Building Inspector amounted to \$9,386,132. It was thought by many that it would be several years before this record could be exceeded or even equaled and when the year closed with financial conditions unsettled, these people were more confirmed in this opinion. However, they failed to take into account the circumstances that are causing Portland to progress despite any handicaps and early in 1908 it was evident that the year would establish a new record.

More strictly first-class office buildings have been erected in Portland during the past three years than during the entire previous history of the city. Where builders had hitherto been putting up four, five or six-story structures, they have more recently followed plans for eight, ten and 12-story blocks. In the latest construction ideas are incorporated, including both design and material. Steel and reinforced concrete are now almost universally used for cores and office buildings, while warehouses are either of these materials or of heavy mill construction.

In the central business district many of these splendid office structures have been completed during the past 12 months and others are now under way. The two largest buildings completed during this time were the ten-story Corbett block at Fifth and Morrison streets, and the 12-story Board of Trade block at Fourth and Oak streets.

The first of these is of steel, and the second of reinforced concrete, and both are splendid types of Portland's new office structures, the Corbett building resembling quite closely the 12-story Wells-Fargo block completed during 1907. The Board of Trade building is not, as its name implies, the home of that organization, but is under private ownership.

Among the other large buildings completed during the year are the Commercial Club building, eight stories, Fifth and Oak streets; Medical building, seven stories, Park and Alder streets; Cornelius Hotel, seven stories, Park and Alder streets; Beck building, five stories, Seventh and Oak streets; Masonic Temple, five stories, West Park and Yamhill streets, and numerous other structures, both for office and business uses. The entire cost of Class A, B and C structures begun during the year, according to the official permits, was \$11,132,880. Besides this, permits were issued for reinforced concrete buildings, costing \$764,280, and frame business buildings outside the fire limits amounting to \$1,750,075.

Work has started during the past few months on some of the finest buildings yet erected in Portland. Among these is the Meter & Frank Company's ten-story annex, covering a quarter block at Sixth and Alder streets, the steel skeleton for which is nearly completed. Another ten-story building is being erected by the Lewis estate at Fourth and Oak streets, to be of reinforced concrete. Across the street from the Lewis building, C. K. Henry is putting up a high-class business structure which will go at least five stories and maybe higher. At Fifth and Stark, in the same district, Gay Lombard is erecting a six-story block.

In addition to several hotels that have recently been completed, work is in progress on others that will be substantial additions to Portland's hoteleries. One of these is a nine-story annex to the Imperial, at Seventh and Stark streets, and another the eight-story annex to the Oregon, on Park street, between Oak and Stark. The six-story Rosenblatt hotel at Tenth and Alder streets is another modern hostelry under way. Important additions to the semi-public buildings of Portland are the new homes of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations. The Y. W. C. A. building, five stories in height and

occupying a quarter block at the northeast corner of Seventh and Taylor streets, has been completed and dedicated during the past month. The Y. M. C. A. building is now under construction, and occupies the remainder of the half block facing Taylor street and extending to Sixth. This building will be eight stories high, 150 by 100 feet. It will be one of the largest structures in the city, having floor space equal to that of the Wells-Fargo building, which is 12 stories high and covers a quarter block. Both these buildings were made possible by public subscriptions.

In the erection of warehouses, also, the past year has been one of the busiest in the history of Portland. With an annual wholesale trade estimated at \$200,000,000, and constantly increasing, the city's facilities in this line are taxed to their uttermost. Parlin & Orendorf have just completed a large warehouse on the East Side wholesale district, and Marshall, Wells & Co. will soon start construction on a building in North Portland, where they have purchased two blocks for their Portland headquarters. Crane & Co. are completing a warehouse at Thirtieth and Flinders, and the Flinders Co. is building at Fifteenth and Gilson, the Pacific Paper Company has a warehouse under way at Fourth and Keny, W. P. Fuller & Co. have just started construction on a warehouse to cover an entire block in North Portland, and several other similar buildings are under way.

In the erection of new houses even greater progress has been made during the past year. In the time 2167 permits have been taken out for dwellings. Of these 209 were for West Side locations and 2383 for East Side sites. The cost of dwellings erected on the West Side was \$614,950, and of those erected on the East Side was \$4,360,850.

In spite of the large expenditure, there is no indication that Portland is overbuilding. So rapidly is the population growing that there are few vacant houses, and the commercial progress is keeping fully up with the additional accommodations. There is every prospect that construction in both lines will go on unabated during the present year. Among the large business blocks on which work will soon start will be a handsome structure for Olds, Wortman & King, to cover the entire block in the retail district.

BUILDINGS OF BETTER TYPE

Modern Structures in Portland's Retail and Wholesale Districts Give City Metropolitan Appearance.

By W. C. Knighton.

WE need only to look back a few years to find buildings of all classes in Portland that can now be considered as belonging to an obsolete architecture, so rapid has been the progress in construction work. The area between First and Third streets, Pine and Yamhill streets, comprised the office and retail district of Portland's past. Within this area efforts have been made to remodel some of the substantial structures with a view of "holding their own" against the encroachment of modern buildings. Introducing such modern conveniences as could consistently be placed in buildings of that character and construction, proved of no avail as the march of progress has been so rapid that they have been relegated to the past with no hope of serving such purpose in the future.

Portland's antiquated buildings do not represent pioneer parsimoniousness, since they exhibit a lavish expenditure, but the methods of construction have changed so rapidly that better and larger buildings are now erected at practically the same cost.

That the modern fireproof office building is a safe and profitable investment is shown by the number of structures now in course of erection in Portland. A bird's-eye view of the district bounded by Morrison, Oak, Fourth and Tenth streets, presents a very interesting and fascinating view of reinforced concrete and steel frame buildings. Concrete and steel are in the throes of a mighty struggle for supremacy. In our old buildings of brick very little steel was used. In our modern steel buildings very little

brick, if any, is used, except in the way of a veneer. Our walls are no longer constructed of combustible materials, neither are floors or roof. The concrete structures contain every advantage enjoyed by steel, including ornamentation, and frequently are more economical of construction. The desire of the new investor to excel his neighbor in point of conveniences and character of design, shows a confident and progressive spirit that is highly commendable. It is in this spirit that places Portland building on a par with any Eastern city and causes the Eastern visitor surprise and wonderment that the conveniences and equipment are equal and in many cases superior to buildings in his own city.

Every city has its warehouse and wholesale district. That these districts are not permanent until the future of the city is assured, is exemplified by the changes that have taken place in the wholesale district of this city during the last two or three years. These changes have been brought about by the great expansion and increase of business and the general inability to meet commercial conditions with three or four-story buildings on Front and First streets. The expenditure of millions of dollars in new buildings on Fourth and Fifth streets, north of Oak, firmly establishes the new wholesale district.

The types of buildings recently erected and now in course of construction are especially designed and equipped for the handling of large quantities of merchandise with economy and rapidity. Thirtieth street being the north and south axis of the warehouse district, it acts as a magnet drawing warehouses on either side of it for the full length of the district, forcing residences to be removed or demolished. An inquiry into property in this section reveals the fact that large corporations have purchased heavy holdings for the erection of buildings. The warehouses and other buildings in course of erection here and in contemplation for the near future, represent an expenditure of millions of dollars.

When one takes into consideration that Portland has an annual lumber output of over 600,000,000 feet, brick plants with a capacity of 30,000,000 annually, shingle mills, sash and door factories, foundries and plants of all kinds with capacities in the same pro-

portion, for the manufacture of materials used in construction work and with the immense amount of building under way during the past few years, it is no wonder that this endless chain of industries in construction work alone enabled Portland's skilled and unskilled labor to have steady employment during the financial depression of the past year. While the bread line was growing larger and larger in other cities, Portland was not visibly affected in this way. All the more credit is due to Portland from the fact that the remarkable activity is along conservative lines, bringing confidence and security to the investor.

In concluding this summary there is another aspect of the comparison of old with new buildings in Portland, and that is how skillfully the modern designer has become in utilizing space. In former times we frequently found builders erecting cheap stores upon property worth four times the cost of the building.

Today the architect must reverse this ratio. He must erect an expensive edifice on an area of ground probably worth much less. Taking as an example the old-time four-story building, a modern structure of the same height would contain six stories, thereby greatly increasing the capacity for revenue. The money represented by this waste between the basement and

roof, expended in high ceilings and ornamental incumbrance, would about offset the expense necessary to install the modern so-called conveniences, to be found in all new buildings. In past times the architect demanded as much space as he wished for the building. Today the propertyowner submits a given area to be used to the greatest advantage.

This reduction of area, because of high values, has forced the architect to condense his constructive methods within financial requirements. He must give the owner the best materials, the most convenient interior, and a safe and fireproof structure throughout and all in conformity with financial conditions and limited area.

The Oregonian building stands as the pioneer steel building of Portland. Her builders took the first step to establish steel over brick. A long line of descent has followed this initial venture. Progressive and enterprising builders are crowding the architects and engineers to the highest efficiency. The introduction of steel opened a new era to city builders which has forever relegated to the past the common brick building. The future has in store the possibilities of the reinforced concrete structures which will interest the commercial world with the same startling departures steel brought in its successful competition with brick.

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VALUE OF A FEW LEADING OREGON PRODUCTS FOR 1908.	
Lumber	\$30,000,000
Dairying	17,250,000
Wheat	11,000,000
Fruit	3,250,000
Gold	2,850,000
Wool	2,500,000
Fish	1,837,500
Hops	1,250,000
Total	\$70,984,500

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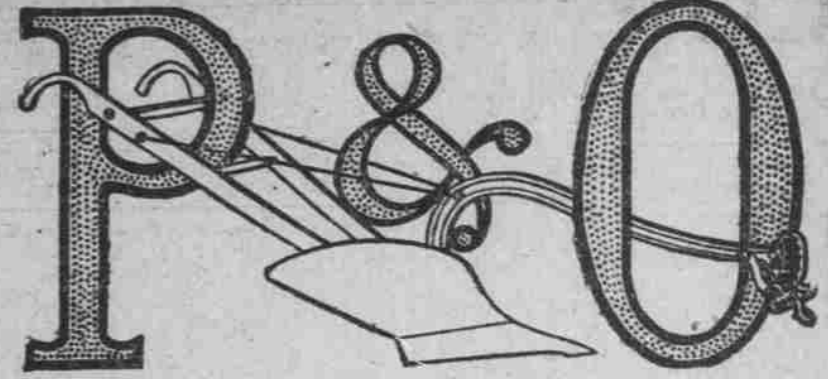
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