

BUILDING NEWS

700 MEN WILL GO BACK TO WORK

Eastern and Western Lumber Company to Resume Operations Monday.

HAS BEEN CLOSED FOR THREE WEEKS

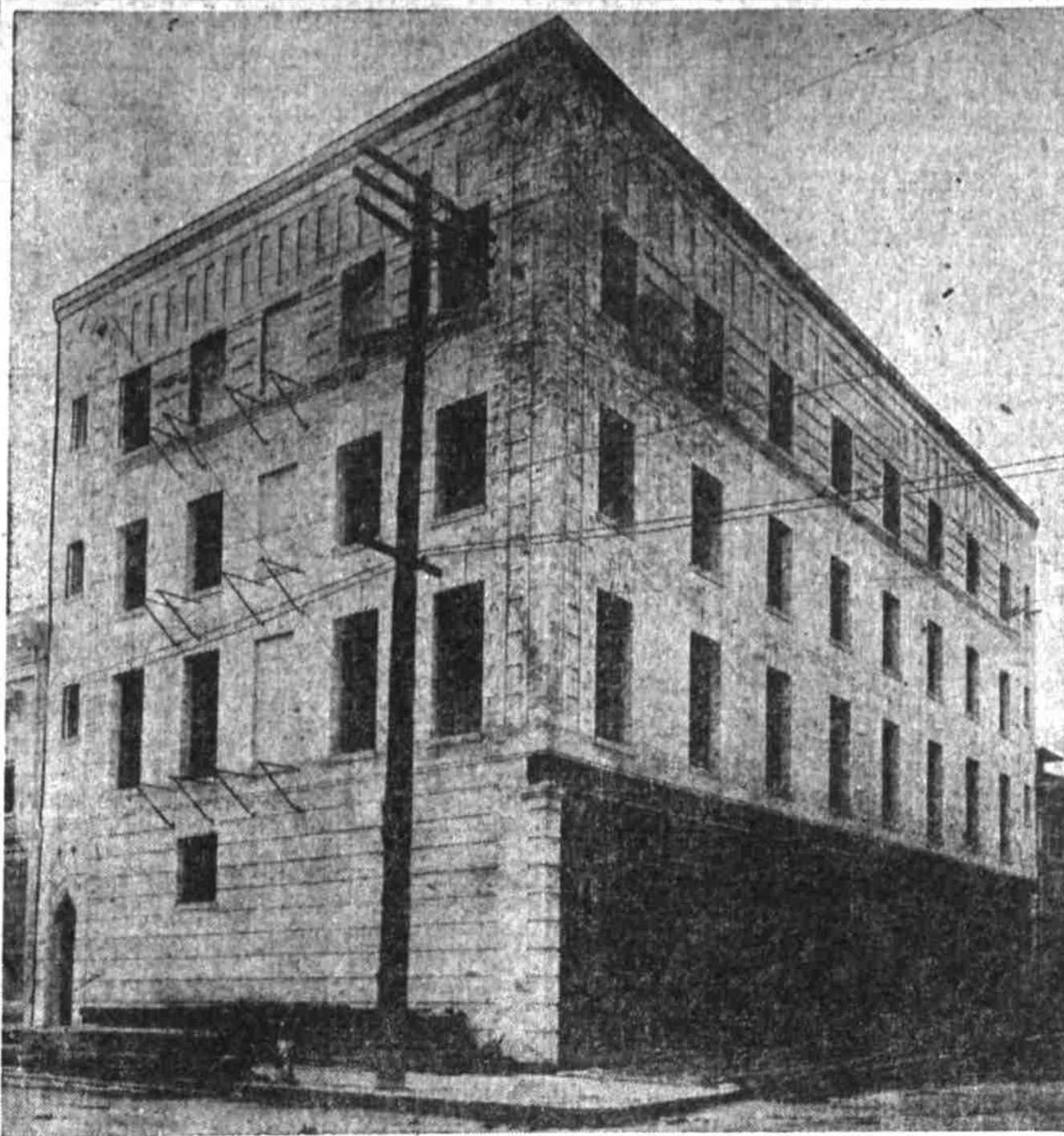
Advanced Freight Rates on Eastern Shipments and Financial Flurry Caused Big Drop in Demand for Plant's Output.

The Eastern & Western Lumber company will resume operations next Monday, after a close-down of three weeks. Only the day crew will be put to work for a starter, but it is hoped that business will pick up sufficiently to also find work for the night shift before long. In the neighborhood of 700 men were affected by the close-down of the mill, and the resumption of operations will therefore mean much to the city. Cancellations of orders from the east because of the advanced freight rate and the financial flurry have caused a great falling off in the demand for lumber, and this was the cause of the close-down of the Eastern & Western plant, as well as a large number of other plants in the city and throughout the state.

The Peninsula Lumber company's plant on the peninsula will probably also resume operations in a small way soon. This company's plant is now being given a thorough overhauling. The plant of the Eastern & Western Lumber company has been overhauled, and if trade keeps up no shut-down will be necessary during the winter for repairs.

The Portland mill as well as the North Pacific and the large plant of the Iman-Poulsen Lumber company are in operation, running day shifts only, and it is reported by the managers of these concerns that they will be kept running. To induce local buying in order that the plants might be kept going, prices have been marked down another \$1, so that rough common is now quoted at \$11, or \$4 less per 1,000 feet than early in the year. There is little probability of it going lower, owing to the prices of logs, which have so far shown little indication of weakening.

Loggers have closed their camps as a result of the curtailment of the output of lumber, and since there is no danger of losing the stumpage they will not likely resume cutting until conditions warrant a larger input. The copious rains of the past several days have started millions of feet of logs down the streams, and the booms at the mouth of the Lewis, Clatsop, Kalama and other rivers are rapidly filling up. Sash and door manufacturers are still keeping busy on advance orders and will be occupied for several weeks to come without much new business; but they, too, have been affected by the new rate and are looking to the interstate commerce commission for redress, as well as the lumbermen.



New Building of Chinese Syndicate, Second and Salmon Streets.

California business has been quiet during the past week, partly because of the financial flurry, and a revival in that market is looked for with the improvement of the financial situation.

James I. Marshall.

One of the growing concerns in the city is the James I. Marshall Manufacturing company. This company is engaged in contracting, also showcase and fixture manufacturing, and has a large factory covering 20,000 feet of floor space at Fourth and Couch streets. James I. Marshall is the president and manager, and has been in business in Portland for the past 25 years. Mr. Marshall has planned and built some of the finest buildings in Portland.

20-year case, 16 1/2 size watch, Elgin or Waltham movement, \$9.75, at Metzger's, 342 Washington street.

GOING INTO TERROR OF SKYSCRAPERS MAKE PLANS FOR MANY RESIDENCES

Provisions Made to Prevent Building to Greater Height.

GREAT DANGER FROM BIG CONFLAGRATION

Panic, Also, Would Jam the Narrow Streets With Frantic Humanity, Causing Great Loss of Life—Tower High in Air.

New York city is deeply stirred over the constantly-increasing height to which builders are pushing their skyscraping steel-frame structures on the lower end of Manhattan island. No less than three different building projects are maturing, that mean to eclipse the lofty 41-story Singer structure that now towers above lower Broadway.

The building codes revision committee of the New York board of aldermen, has recently adopted a provision limiting the height of all new constructions to 250 feet above sidewalk level; but as it will be several months before the new building code is ready for adoption, the building inspector's department is, under the present laws, compelled to issue a permit for the construction of a building to whatever height the plans call for.

Danger From Fire. An set forth by President Babb of the New York board of aldermen, and by Calvin Tompkins of the Municipal Art society, the chief danger in the skyscraper—and more especially in those districts where there are groups of these structures, or extensive areas almost completely covered by them—appears to lie in the increased liability to fire in the upper stories beyond the reach of the fireman.

The problem of light and air is also becoming a very serious one. "It is estimated that if a fire should break out in the upper stories of one of these tall buildings on lower Broadway and sweep through the skyscraper district, the resultant loss would approximate \$2,000,000, and the insurance companies could probably pay not over 20 or 25 per cent on the dollar."

It is a matter in which not only the owners of the buildings and the insurance companies are interested, but also the mortgage and trust companies, the savings banks, the trustees and managers of estates and trust funds and individual investors, not to mention the tenants. Restrictions of some sort by law cannot come too early—before a terrible catastrophe teaches a lesson too late and forces the community to reach itself for its shortsightedness. The light and air conditions do not project a menace anywhere near the proportions of the fire loss possibilities.

Streets Too Narrow. But there is still another danger in the New York skyscraper—one that directly affects vastly more people than either of the others. Calvin Tompkins of the Municipal Art society says that he has been informed by construction engineers that in case of a sudden shock or unforeseen incident calculated to terrify the tenants of the lofty buildings, the narrow streets of the skyscraper district would not begin to be large enough to accommodate the pack of humanity that would swarm from the many-storied hives.

Very many of these buildings house regularly, during about seven hours of the day, from 2,000 to 3,000 people; not to mention the outsiders called there by business; others house 4,000 or 5,000 each regularly, and a few many more than that number. Suppose an explosion in the basement—an accident not in itself serious—were to induce a stampede from one of these skyscrapers somewhere around 2 o'clock today? How many would ever get outside alive—how many unharmed? or the crush were to put the elevators out of use, and leave only the stairs and the fire escapes, the scene that the ordinary imagination can picture is too sickening to dwell upon. One has only to recall the senseless Brooklyn bridge disaster of a century ago to get an idea of the idea of the resultant trampling out of human life.

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Architects are Fairly Busy With Houses of the Better Sort.

MANY INQUIRIES COMING TO OFFICES

Low Price of Materials of Nearly All Kinds Tempts Home Builders to Put Up Structures of This Character.

Reports from the offices of all the leading architects of Portland tell of a large amount of new construction being ordered, and an increase of inquiry by prospective builders as to the cost of building materials and price of labor, etc.

Ernest Kroner, who has recently returned from a three months' trip abroad, has already under construction a \$3,000 double flat at Front and Curry streets. The building is going up on a quarter block site, owned by Mr. Kroner and on which he has three handsome new residences which were put up last summer at a cost of \$9,000.

H. J. Hefty has plans prepared for a two-story store building to be erected by T. A. Sutherland in South Portland, on First street, between Hall and Lincoln. The building is to be a combination of concrete and frame construction.

Plans for Three Homes. H. C. Dittich has plans prepared for the three following residences, the contracts for which will be let in a few days: P. Friberg, in Overlook addition, two-story frame, \$2,500; Mr. Clark, East Thirty-third and Killingsworth, \$2,000; J. G. Woods, East Thirty-third and Holbrook.

A. H. Faber is preparing plans for a nine-room residence for J. B. Pilkington on East Twenty-third and a vitrified slag residence for himself to be erected at Piedmont and to cost \$4,000.

Christian Church Parsonage. C. C. Robins is getting up plans and specifications for a parsonage for the Christian church at East Twentieth and East Salmon streets, which will cost when completed about \$2,500.

W. L. Morgan has a number of late commissions among which may be mentioned the following: An eight-room frame dwelling for Mrs. Charles Croger, to be on a corner of Wilamette Heights at a cost of \$5,500; a two-story frame residence for Fred Venes to cost \$5,000 and a three-story brick structure for the Star Brewing company to be erected at First and Madison streets, which will cost about \$35,000.

J. O. Wrenn has ready the completion of plans for a bungalow and a residence to be erected at East Twenty-second and Clinton streets for the Apartment Building company. F. M. Anderson has under way plans for a two-story, seven-room residence for C. H. Hansen to be erected in Hansen's addition.

A. H. Faber is preparing plans for a two-story, eight-room residence for Mr. Gilmore, which will be erected at East Twenty-seventh and Schuyler streets.

Business College Plans. Plans for the Christian Brothers business college to be erected in Holladay Park addition are being prepared in the office of Joseph Jacobberger.

J. O. Wrenn has ready the plans for a four-story apartment-house to be built near the fair grounds. The improvement is to be made by a local capitalist at a cost of \$5,000.

The Gibson-Berndt company is ready with the plans for an apartment building for the Belt Building company, which will go up on Hawthorne avenue and East Twelfth street.

A. C. Ewert is preparing plans for two six-room frame dwellings to be built at East Thirtieth and East Alder streets, total cost \$4,000.

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BIG SLUMP IN ALL MATERIALS

Most Opportune Time in Portland's History for Home Building.

COST REDUCED BY TWENTY PER CENT

Disarrangement of General Business Owing to Holidays Has Brought Slump in Practically All Lines of Building Goods.

Very considerable reductions in the price of both material and labor have reduced the cost of building in Portland fully 30 per cent and are already having a noticeable effect on the volume of new construction. Especially is this so with regard to dwellings of moderate cost.

Immediately following the governor's special holiday proclamation everybody was more or less at sea, and the volume of new building projects declined perceptibly. Now that light is beginning to break, owners of vacant property, who would not consider building a few months ago, when prices were soaring, are now asking for estimates, with the view of building. The reason for this change of attitude is to be found in the lessened cost of all building materials and the plentifulness of labor.

Lumber is down, not among the little dealers alone, but among the big ones as well, while \$1.50 to \$1.60 has been scaled from the price of brick.

Other Materials Slump.

Cement is off from 25 cents to 50 cents a barrel, owing to grade, and dealers are looking for a further slump. Sand and gravel are quoted at the old figure, \$3 a load, but it is understood that this figure has been scaled.

There has been no reduction in the price of paint, glass or varnish, but linseed oil is quoted 10 cents a gallon lower. Paint has not followed the general upward trend of other materials, and for that reason there will be no decline.

Labor, the most expensive element in house building, has declined in cost quite as much as building material. Common labor, which was scarce at \$2.50 a day last summer, is now plentiful at \$1.75, while men are offering to work for \$1.75. The union scale for bricklayers, carpenters, painters and other workers, has not been reduced from last summer, but a great many workmen are taking work by the job, with the result that the builders get their work done for less money than if they employed day labor and operated with a foreman.

As an indication of the changed conditions and the new angle at which things are seen, one contractor remarked that six months ago, 1,000 bricks laid was a good day's work for the average brickmason, while now the average is nearer 1,500.

Lumber Market Elastic. Lumber dealers say that the lumber market is "elastic," which means that each dealer makes his own prices and that for the first time in Portland for a long while there is real competition among the lumber dealers.

Up to a short time ago, a half dozen lumber dealers might bid on a lumber house bill and there would not be \$5 difference in the amounts of their bids, but now there is apt to be a wide difference, with the result that the contractor is responsible for the statement that a bill of lumber which would have cost \$1,000 last July can now be bought for \$800.

So it is safe to say that building is from 20 to 25 per cent cheaper now than last summer. In other words, where a contractor would have submitted a bid of \$22,000 on a certain job last summer, he would now offer to do the same work for \$1,500 or \$1,600. The moral of this is that now is the time to build. It is not probable that this condition will last long.

DRYING OUT OF STONE BUILDINGS

Experiments in Belgian City Successful in Elimination of Moisture.

The American consul at Ghent, Belgium, W. P. Atwell, in a report, tells of successful experiments in that city, going to show that it is possible to eliminate and prevent the accumulation of excessive moisture in stone and brick buildings and public buildings.

During the past year, these experiments were for the first time officially made in the city of Ghent, where the city and university libraries were seriously threatened by humidity, and certain parts could no longer be used and had to be completely abandoned. It was therefore decided by the authorities that a trial should be made with a new system of drawing humidity out of walls, which has recently been invented by a Belgian, after long and patient researches.

The experiments began July 14, and were completed August 14. In a room containing 42,377 cubic feet, there was found to be on July 13, 83 degrees of humidity (hygrometric degree) at that time a strong, muggy smell was found to exist. The greater part of the wall was covered with spongy material, while the floor of the room was almost continually wet.

September 13, after a 30-day test of the system, the humidity was found to have lowered from 83 to 60 degrees. The walls had become completely dry, and the spongy material had disappeared. The stone floor or pavement had dried out and remained so, while prior to these experiments it had always been found to be moist.

In Belgium the normal humidity of the atmosphere in buildings in good condition varies between 60 and 70 degrees.

CARBOLIC ACID GIRL PROTECTS HER FACE (Special Dispatch to The Journal.) Butte, Mont., Dec. 7.—Della Moyle, a pretty girl of 13 years, committed suicide last evening by swallowing carbolic acid, because her mother had scolded her for coming home late. The girl had placed the neck of the bottle entirely in her mouth and drained its contents, so as not to burn her features.

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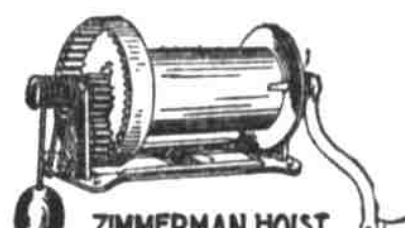
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