

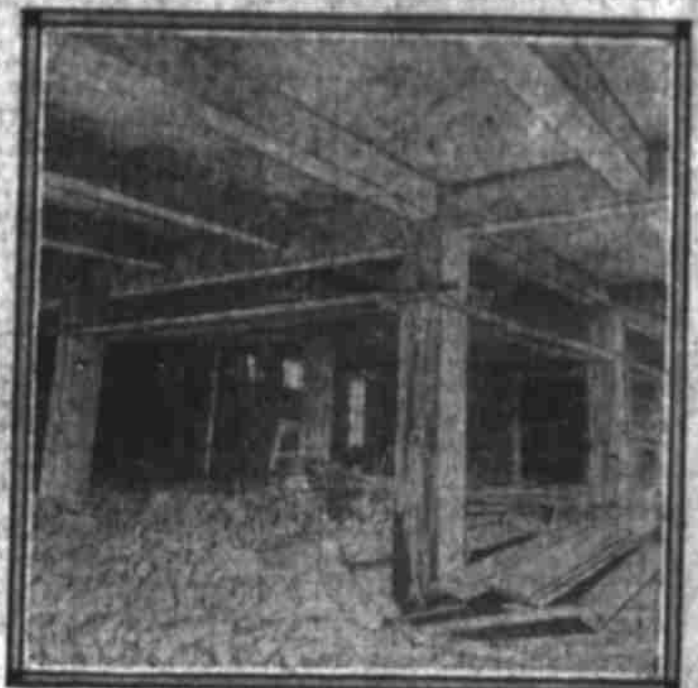
PORTLAND, OREGON, SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 21, 1919

## PUTTING the PHOENIX out of BUSINESS

### There Should Be No Necessity of Rebuilding Burned Cities, Because When Buildings Are Properly Fire-proofed There Need Be No Great Fires



The Effect of Not Concreting Iron Columns: From the Calvert Building in Baltimore.



The Best Way—Concreting Columns and Walls to Assure Absolute Safety.



Continental Trust Company Building After the Baltimore Fire, Showing How the Structure Was Saved Because the Windows Were Not Properly Protected.

dwelling gone. Man's war for the subjugation of nature called for casualties; and it has been Americans' proud boast that they kept a tame phoenix in their back yards, ready to immolate itself at the first alarm of fire and hatch out, bigger than ever, from the glowing embers.

But the steadily growing totals of our fire losses and the recurring horrors of holocausts have begun to make capital wonder whether a wise expenditure in building before fires could occur is not the shrewdest economy; and a people rapidly settling down to orderly progress of industry, trade and the calm satisfaction of living has begun to resent being burned to death whenever some factory or loft, crowded with toilers, catches fire.

The men who deal with the hard, plain facts of fire insurance had those enormous losses thundering upon their coffers year after year. The year 1908 cost \$217,000,000; 1907 cost \$216,000,000; 1906, with San Francisco's disaster to swell the total, reached \$518,000,000; 1905 cost \$165,000,000; 1904, Baltimore's 135 acres being fire swept, cost \$220,000,000; 1903, with losses of \$125,000,000, represented a "fortunate" year; 1902 had cost \$161,000,000; 1901 burned \$165,000,000; 1900, the opening of the century, sacrificed \$160,000,000.

#### NO NEED TO DESPAIR

It seemed as though, with San Francisco's terrific conflagration following hard on the heels of Baltimore's, the national demon of fire had understood how readily a couple of hundred million dollars could be ravished from a people who built their cities as an invitation to his dread activities.

The national feeling of hopelessness and helplessness, with the new assurance that these overwhelming losses need not persist, is now gradually giving way to a slowly broadening sentiment that, no matter how eagerly private greed may seek to run up the familiar firetraps which have slain their thousands in the past, the time has come when every city and town, and every state in its turn, must put the public safety above all other considerations. Expediency must give way to care.

The one state building code which has been enacted into a law is that of Ohio. It is still only partially completed; but the new model code drawn up by the National Board of Fire Underwriters has largely influenced its provisions as so far defined.

In cities of the importance of New Orleans, Atlanta, Manchester and Newark, codes have been framed on the lines of the model code and embodied in the municipal regulations. Codes have been drawn up, along similar lines, for Birmingham, Erie, New Brunswick and Syracuse. There are now no fewer than forty cities which are in consultation with the national board over the revision of their building laws and the inclusion of the provisions of the model code.

(CONTINUED ON INSIDE PAGE)



Safe Deposit and Trust Company Building, of Baltimore, That Was Practically Uninjured During the Great Fire, and Could Have Opened for Business the Day After the Blaze.

DOES it lie within the power of the American people to protect themselves from the chronic series of disastrous fires for which this country has become notorious?

Year after year, with the great cities equipped with fire departments that are the amazed admiration of the world for their unequalled equipment, efficiency and daring, the fire losses of the United States show totals of lives lost and property destroyed which are calculated to fill with dismay any nation that has not been habituated, so to speak, to being burned

out of house and home and left partially a cinder itself.

In 1909, with a total population of 88,257,957, the fire loss here amounted to \$188,872,072, or \$2.14 for every person in the United States. In 1910, when the population reached 91,972,266, the losses rose to \$214,295,379, or \$2.33 per head. Meanwhile, France led the per capita loss in Europe, with 92 cents, and Germany, almost unscathed, found its fire cost only 19 cents per head.

Yet, with some few and simple principles of building construction observed—

the concreting of steel columns, the protection of windows, the proper safeguarding of floor openings—the phoenix might have been already put out of business here, as it has been in Europe. There would be no need for there would be no

at hand. A model code, based on the most recent research, is being developed for the cities and towns of the United States. The most effective insurances that must ever be put into effect are those that are based on the guardian spirit of the code's progress, which, in comparison with the past, nevertheless marks the beginning of a new generation.

and that is a quality of a different kind. When first a code could be developed, it was supposed that a permanent assurance of safety should be completed. The revelations appear that was instituted was a code, to be practical in its application, subject to the changing conditions of building enterprises, which alter from time to time. The model building code on



View of the Burned District of Baltimore Where Whole Blocks of Buildings Here Lost Because of Improper Window Protection.