PROSPECTS HARD TO FATHOM

What Building Activities Will Do is Difficult to Say.

IN NEW YORK $150,000,000

Interesting Review of Building Operations and Future Possibilities in American Contractor December 5.

The following article is reprinted from the American Contractor of December 5:

Rarely, if ever, has there been a time when the future in the building industry has been so difficult to scan, as during the last few weeks and months. Rarely, if ever, have the prospects been so tantalizing, now promising a splendid expansion, now shadowed by the darkest clouds of incredulity. Rarely, if ever, has the interest in this question been so keen among architects, engineers, contractors and builders.

If architects and contractors are the more directly interested a vastly larger class of the American people are vitally concerned. For there is in the country no industry, save agriculture in its entirety, that equals in importance that of construction work. Building permits issued in New York City this year will be about $150,000,000. At the same average throughout the country the total building of the country would amount to about $1,000,000,000. The building permits in Chicago for the year will reach about $20,000,000. On that basis the total for the country would be $4,500,000,000. The active work in Philadelphia in 1914 will total somewhere near $40,000,000. At a corresponding rate the building for the entire country would reach close to $3,000,000,000. The per capita construction work in the rural districts is doubtless less than in the towns and cities, but the majority of the American people now live in towns and cities and the growth of the smaller municipalities in the great majority of instances equals or exceeds that of the larger cities. It would perhaps be extremely conservative to estimate the total building of the country in excess of $2,000,000,000 annually or approximately $100 for each family. In its final analysis most of the building cost consists of labor. And remembering that the average family income throughout the country is scarcely $500, the building industry looms up as of commanding importance, a degree of importance not generally appreciated. It represents about 20 per cent of the total expenditures of the people.

Business Perplexity.

Like all other branches of human effort, it is involved more or less at present in the general business perplexity. Yet it is at least semi-independent, and does not ebb and flow in exact rhythm with general conditions. It possesses to a considerable degree an initiative of its own, but only so far as it is free from financial dependence. The one great cloud that has hovered over the American nation during the last several months has been financial in its character. There have been other contributing elements to the slowing down of business, and some of them no doubt important, but in recent years large American borrowers had availed themselves more and more of the plethoric European money bags, borrowing there in huge and ever increasing amounts, year after year. When the chill of war went through the financial world the European purse strings tightened and those large American borrowers, who crossed the seas for their requirements, were "up against it."

Another even more serious consideration was the large holdings of American securities abroad in consequence of the borrowing. To prevent the dumping of these securities on this side, and the consequent draining of our gold, the stock exchanges had to close. Additional unsettlement came pending the inauguration of the new banking system. It is little wonder that the bankers "sat tight" and waited. But those plunges have been taken and are now things of the past. It is of the future that the building interests are now the more vitally concerned. What of the future?

The American Contractor has taken special pains during the last few days to sound the temper of the building trade, in all parts of the country. A large number of architects, contractors, builders, bankers and others have been interviewed and their best judgment as to the outlook has been obtained. These judgments may be summarized as most cheering. The spirit of optimism is reasserting itself in all parts of the country and the way seems to be paved for greater activity.

Returning Confidence.

Looking to general conditions, the returning financial confidence is no doubt of prime importance. The stock exchanges are gradually resuming their normal activities. The fear of the foreign dumping of American securities is in part dispelled. And well it may be. The new banking system insures an adequate supply of currency for domestic needs, elastic enough to suit all conditions of trade. And should the sale of foreign held securities again increase sufficiently to endanger the gold reserves, it would be as simple a matter as before to again close the stock exchanges. There would be in that measure no reflection upon the domestic financial situation. It would be merely a precaution to retain our gold. Considerable timidity continues in banking circles, induced in large measure by the European war and the fear of a possible American involvement of some sort, but confidence is rapidly growing that the United States can make itself independent financially as well as politically, and as that idea strengthens the skies will brighten to gorgeous hues. The country may not yet be approaching a boom period, but the allaying of financial fear, that has recently occurred, is an asset of almost incalculable value. A condition that deserves special emphasis is that architects almost everywhere are optimistic in the expression of their views, and the reasonable interpretation of this is that a large amount of work is being planned.

New Building for Myers-Dillon Corner

Work is to begin July 1 next on the new office and store building at Sixteenth and Farnam streets, on the location known as the Myers & Dillon corner. The syndicate, headed by Armstrong & Walsh, that obtained a ninety-nine-year lease on the ground some months ago, is planning to go ahead with the construction of a four-story reinforced concrete structure. Two large store rooms are planned for the first floor. There is to be a basement entrance at the northeast corner direct from the sidewalk. The two upper floors are to be used for office rooms. Applications for many of the rooms are already on file at the office of Armstrong & Walsh.

Concrete Building Company is Seeking Location in Omaha

The W. T. Redman Perfect Hollow Wall Concrete Manufacturing company, to be incorporated in Alabama, is looking for a location for a plant in Omaha, where it intends to manufacture its forms. This company manufactures steel forms for constructing any kind of buildings, retaining walls, sea walls, bridge piers, locks, dams and silos.

George E. Harris, general agent for the company, has been in Omaha for some days regarding the matter of a suitable location for a local plant. He has an office at 1724 Davenport street.

The company manufactures a steel form, designed to take the place of the board forms that it is necessary to build as the work progresses in the construction of a concrete building. Forms of various sizes are built in sections. The forms of a building are laid in sections and filled with concrete. As the concrete sets and hardens the forms are taken off, placed at a higher level and refilled. These forms, Mrs. Harris says, are coming into general use in the construction of large concrete building in the east.

Local Carpenters to Build Home for Mrs. Henry Peters

Before Sunday night the carpenters of Omaha expect to have practically finished the construction of the four-room cottage for Mrs. Henry Peters, the widow, at 4812 North Fortieth street. The lumber dealers have furnished the lumber. The bricklayers have built the foundation. The carpenters are now to take hold in voluntary work and build the house. They have announced the matter publicly from the labor union headquarters and expect to have a good force of workmen on the job.

Missouri Pacific Buys Fifteen City Blocks for Trackage

Fifteen blocks of ground between Sherwood avenue and Grace street has just been purchased by the Missouri Pacific Railway company. The strip adjoins the present tracks of the company. A proposed enlargement of the trackage is the occasion for the purchase at this time. The aggregate amount for this property is said to have been about $20,000. The company does not talk of building the additional tracks at once, but eventually.

CENTER STREET CAR LINE IS NOW IN FULL OPERATION

The West Center street community is rejoicing over its new car line. The first car made the trip over the line last week. It was an occasion of jollification for the neighborhood. Hundreds gathered at the end of the car line to receive the first car, which carried school teachers and pupils of the Beal school. G. W. Wattles, president of the car company, and N. P. Dodge, jr., in behalf of the West Center street people, delivered short addresses. The extension is one and seven-tenths miles long from Forty-eighth and Leavenworth, where it leaves the Leavenworth line. It brings hundreds of people to within from one to four blocks of a car line, who up to this time were a half-mile removed from the car line.

ALAMITO COMPANY IS LOCATED IN NEW PLANT

The Alamito Dairy company is now doing business in good shape in its new plant at Twenty-sixth and Leavenworth. The former location on Farnam street is still being retained as a branch place for some of the retail trade, as the new plant is not yet quite properly equipped to handle the retail trade. Practically every other department of the excellent new plant is now in full working order.

TUKEY BUYS THREE HOUSES AND VACANT LOT ON CLARK

A. P. Tukey & Son have just purchased three houses of Mrs. Catherine Hamerick and Mrs. Nell Leary at the northwest corner of Twentieth and Clark streets. A vacant lot was also included in the purchase. Tukey expects to sell the vacant lot for a business corner and to sell the three houses separately.

Public Meeting Soon on River Navigation

A public meeting to consider the possibility of Missouri river navigation between Omaha and Kansas City is to be held soon at the Commercial club rooms. It is to be a meeting at which Council Bluffs business men as well as Omaha business men are to be welcomed, as such a project is sure to be of interest to all. This follows the report of the special committee that went to Kansas City a few weeks ago to make a study of the steamboat system now being operated between that city and St. Louis.

J. W. Gamble and R. H. Manley, the special committee, are to leave Monday for Washington, where they are to be delegates to the National Rivers and Harbors congress in session there next week. There they will get some more pointers on Missouri river navigation.

Foster Dismisses Election Contest

The contest brought by Harry Foster, republican candidate for the legislature defeated at the recent election, in which he question the election of Members Larson, Burgess and Druesedow on the ground of errors in the count, was dismissed by him. Hearing had been scheduled before Justice Ed Leeder.

JOHN MAHAR DISMISSED ON CHARGE OF THEFT

John Mahar, Ninth and Capitol avenue, aged 74 years, was arrested for the theft of several Christmas trees. Mahar stated that he picked them up at Twelfth and Davenport streets and was going to give them to poor children in the Third ward. Despite his years, Mahar worked all summer in the harvest fields of South Dakota. He is the father of ten children and came to Omaha in 1871 from Tipperary, Ireland. Judge Foster dismissed the case against him.

Bee Want Ads Produce Results

WAR STAMPS FOR DOCUMENTS

Real Estate Men Learn from Edwin Martin Papers Affected.

THE AMOUNTS ARE VARIOUS

Great Many Conveyances Are Under Regulations of the New Law and All Must Be Properly Observed.

Who shall buy special war tax stamps and who shall not? That is what everybody wants to know, and the real estate men of the city are as much puzzled as anyone else. The real estate men want to know who are brokers in the eyes of this new law. They want to know when a deed shall be stamped and when not. They want to know whether a contract of sale shall be stamped or not. Just which papers shall bear a stamp and whose business it is to buy the stamp are questions puzzling the real estate business. Who would be fined if a document goes out without a stamp is another question they are asking. This question arises because in many cases it is a difficult matter to know just who is obliged to stamp a document.

At the last meeting of the Real Estate exchange Edwin Martin, an attorney who has made considerable of a study of the new law, came before the exchange on invitation and presented his explanation of the new law as he understands it at the present time. He admitted that it was difficult to fathom every detail of it. He did not pretend to be speaking officially, and in many instances he was forced upon uncertain ground by members of the exchange, who hurled dozens of questions at him at once. Nevertheless, he cleared up many points the real estate men wanted to know about, and during the course of his talk many other questions were brought up that could not be definitely answered yes or no by either Mr. Martin or any member of the exchange. The result is that the real estate men will have to call the revenue office quite freely for some time in order to get definite rulings on individual cases as such come up.

Mr. Martin, however, in order to present his subject in concise form, prepared a list of the class of documents, papers, contracts, transactions and businesses that are taxed under the stamp tax act. He selected principally the subjects that he believed would come mostly within the scope of a real estate man's business. He declared even then that his list could not be regarded as entirely official, but that it represented his interpretation of the law as he had studied it.

Some Affected Documents.

Following is the list of matters to be taxed or no, marked "Yes" or "No," according to whether they are to bear a tax or not, in Mr. Martin's interpretation of this law, which is to be in force from December 1, 1914, to January 1, 1916:

Acknowledgment. No.
Abstracts of title. No.
Assignment of mortgage. No.
Banks. Yes. On capital, surplus and profits. One dollar on each $1,000.
Bank checks. No.
Bill of sale. No.
Billiard rooms. Yes. Five dollars each table. Proprietor pays.
Bonds and debentures. Yes. Five cents on each $100.
Bonds, surety. Yes, except those required in legal proceedings. Fifty cents each.
Bowling alleys. Yes. Five dollars on each alley. Proprietor pays.
Brokers. Yes. Thirty-dollar flat tax.
Building and loan associations. No. Stocks and bonds exempt.
Cancellation, stamp or write initials and date.
Certificates of stock. Yes. Five cents on each $100 face value, 2 cents on each $100 for brokers' sales.
Certificate of deposit. No.
Certificate of any description. Yes. Ten cents.
Chattel mortgage. No.
Checks. No.
Contracts of sale. Yes, if they vest title in purchase; same as deeds.
Coupon notes. Yes. Same as promissory notes.
Court bonds. No.
Deeds. Yes. Consideration or value, exclusive of liens, 50 cents for first $500 and same for each additional $500.
Employers' liability. Yes. See insurance (except mutuals).
Escrow deeds. No. Until delivery.
Fidelity insurance. Yes. See Insurance.
Fire insurance. See insurance.
Insurance. Yes. Fire, tornado, etc., new or renewal, ¼ cent on each $1 of premium.
Irrigation companies, mutual. No.
Fine, $100 for failure to affix stamp.
Lease. Yes. Same as deeds.
Listing agreement. No.
Mechanics lien. No.
Memorandum of sale. Yes. Ten cents.
Mortgages. No.
Mutual fire companies. No.
Pension papers. No.
Promissory notes. Yes. Two cents on each $100 or fraction thereof.
Power of attorney. Yes. For voting at corporate meetings, 10 cents.
Power of attorney. Yes. To sell, rent or lease real estate, or sell stocks or bonds, 25 cents each.
Protest. Yes. Any instrument, 25 cents.
Quit claim deed. Yes. See deeds.
Reinsurance. No.
Release of mortgage. No.
Stock certificates. Yes. Five cents on each $100.
Telegrams. Yes. If charge is 15 cents or more, 1 cent for each message.
Telephones. Yes. If charge is 15 cents or more, 1 cent for each message.

Commercial Clubs May Start National Employment Bureau

A big central bureau of employment is being considered by the various large commercial clubs throughout the country. It would be conducted as a supplement to the United States Department of Labor, according to tentative plans. The principal purpose would be to oversee the various private employment agencies that furnish farm labor at special times, such as at harvest time, to see that congestion is prevented and that the flow of labor is more nearly in accord with the demand for it. The plan has been endorsed by the grain and agriculture committee of the Commercial club and is now under consideration by the manufacturers' committee of the Omaha Commercial club. It will be submitted to the executive committee eventually.

RAILROADERS SAY PASS RULE IS OLD AS EXPOSITION

In justification for making the announcement that railroad men are not going to be given free transportation to the Pacific coast exposition next year, railroad officials assert that the rule that is to be adopted is about as old as expositions themselves.

As long ago as when the Centennial was held in Philadelphia in 1876, the railroad men assert that transportation was cut off and that the only railroad employes who rode free were those holding annual passes. The same rule was adopted at the time of the New Orleans exposition, the World's fair in Chicago and the St. Louis exposition.

OFFICES LINED WITH LEAD

Innovation in Equipment of Rooms in City National Building.

NOT PENETRATED BY THE RAYS

Apartments Being Arranged for Doctors Who Will Operate Powerful Machine Which Requires High Voltage.

Lead lined offices are being equipped in the City National Bank building for use of doctors who are operating very powerful X-ray machines in their practice. Great sheets of lead a quarter of an inch thick and weighing hundreds of pounds are being placed to cover the walls and floors. The lead being a poor conductor of electrical current is a protection against what is said would be dangerous penetration from the rays. The City National Bank building is probably the first building in the city to encounter the demand for offices equipped with such material. Work at lining these offices has been going on for some weeks.

It is asserted that if the powerful currents of electricity are not checked by a thorough nonconductor like lead, they will eventually work great harm to the doctor operating the machine and possibly to persons in adjoining rooms.

The machines installed are expected to produce rays generated by 300,000 volts. By the use of a Coolidge tube these scientists say they can produce a ray of electricity of penetrating power equal to that of radium and of the same quality.

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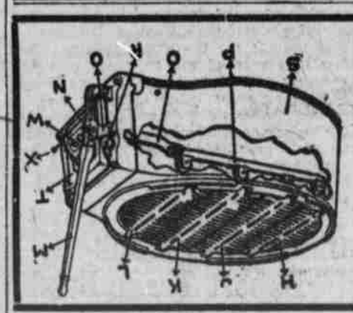

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Lumiere Studio, 1517 Farnam Street, Douglas 3038
Rembrandt Studio, 1922 Farnam St., Douglas 3548
F. A. Rinehart, 18th and Farnam St., Douglas 1732
Rodstrom Studio, 1811 Farnam Street, Douglas 5822
Sandberg & Eitner, 107 So. 16th St., Douglas 2387
J. W. Skogland, 24th and Cuming Sts., Doug. 1375

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