

years. It has been proved that a 4lb. rammer used with quick short strokes makes a better job, with less exertion, than a very heavy rammer. Any normal healthy person, male or female, possessing intelligence and keenness for useful work, can use a rammer. Lazy people should get others to do such work if they want their houses to stand up till their next birthday. An earth house is liable to take on the nature of its builder; if he is lazy the house will probably lie down at the first opportunity.

In my previous paper I said that, should the reaction of the public warrant it, I would equip myself for testing soils on proposed building sites, and preparing reports thereon. The reaction does not do so, and as my time is fully taken up with other activities, I cannot act as adviser, or architect, on any building project until my research work is completed, or, at least much nearer completion than it is.

Nor can I enter into correspondence to amplify instructions already given. All those who have read my *Listener* articles already have more information than I had when my experimental house was started. All that is required in addition is a general knowledge of ordinary building practice, a desire to accomplish something worth while, and confidence in one's ability to do it.

I would be glad to see a few honest, yet ambitious, young men form a co-operative group and learn the art of earth building thoroughly, because although it is the cheapest building process wherever it can be successfully used, and good to look at too, it is the dearth of capable workers in that medium that prevents it being more used.

Many of those in country places who do this sort of work are not technically

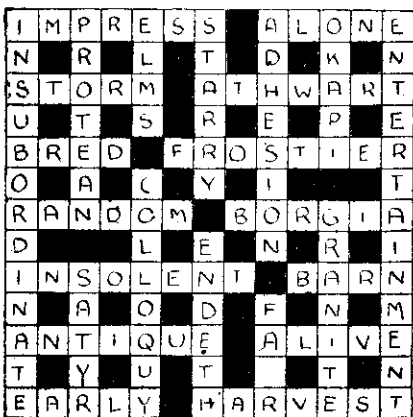
trained to enable them to solve all the problems of construction which they may meet, and would be unable to co-operate with the other branches of the building trade satisfactorily. Therefore it is left to amateur builders to adventure into the building of earth houses. Will some young crusaders lead the way?

Some Points to Remember

WHEN you contemplate building with earth make sure that the site has sufficient suitable soil for the work on or near it, without robbing the garden which is necessary to complete a home. See that the soil is of uniform quality, and make many tests, mixing different kinds of soil if not uniform. Most important of all, find out, by all means available, the chances (near or remote) of the site being flooded. Make full inquiry to discover if any works in progress, or contemplated, are likely to alter or interfere with the natural watershed and increase the risk of flooding, because our earth house, especially if it has a high proportion of clay in it, is liable to collapse if flooded for a few hours. If you think of using the so-called waterproof adobe bricks, make exhaustive tests of the materials and seek the help of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research to discover any faults there may be in the soil when used with Portland cement or bitumen. Bear in mind, too, that if you want a house that is easily kept clean, rough adobe walls will require plastering to produce reasonably smooth surfaces, while a well-made *pise* wall will need no plaster.

"THE LISTENER" CROSSWORD

(Solution to No. 406)



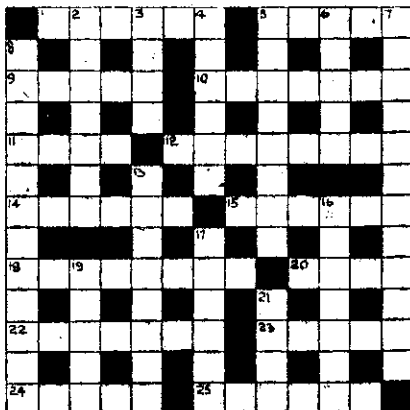
Clues Across

- His charge is said never to forget.
- "For all flesh is as —" (1st Peter, Chap. 1).
- She wrote the letter which was Malvolio's undoing. (see Twelfth Night.)
- Our Dean composes a short poem with a refrain.
- This island was Napoleon's last home.
- Peer around the team in disorder.
- Adder?
- As 21 down gives a Black Sea port.
- Post mine (anag.)
- If back, repartee.
- "He does it with a better grace, but I do it more —" as Sir Andrew Aguecheek said.
- A Disney character who was embarrassed with very large ears.
- Here the larks are put to confusion.
- Ill-treat.

Clues Down

- Combination of car and boat found in a circus.
- Found in the top alcove.
- Small tower.
- Cup-bearer to Zeus.
- Have a care for this nut.
- Amazement.
- Cheek!
- Sure fate in one's face.
- "The best laid — o' mice and men Gang aft agley" (Burns).
- Refuge.
- 19th Century British essayist and critic.
- Does for poems.

No. 407 (Constructed by R.W.C.)



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P. 4

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