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## THE Insurance and Finance Chronicle.

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THE BLOW RECEIVED by the now famous order of the "Iron Hall," when the court at Indianapolis placed it in the hands of a receiver, will presumably prove to be a fatal blow. We notice, however, that an attempt is to be made to rehabilitate the concern by deposing the present supreme officers and reorganizing with new men if the court will rescind its action. We cannot believe that such a request will be granted, for Judge Taylor, who is familiar with the absurdities inherent in its plan of operations as well as the rascality of its past management, cannot consistently turn over to any set of men the funds now under his control, to be used in propagating a demonstrated evil. Besides this, numerous suits to attach the funds of the order in different States have been entered by members with unpaid claims, and the exposures made in the investigation at Indianapolis have laid bare such gross dishonesty and general cussedness on the part of the "supremes" that the very name of the "Iron Hall" is a stench in the public nostrils which will long remain to stop its progress if attempted.

THE OFFICIAL REPORT of Judge Prowse to the Newfoundland Government on the origin and progress of the great St. Johns fire fully confirms the previous accounts which we have published. He says that when the firemen arrived on the scene there was no water and they could do nothing. The water had been turned off at 9 o'clock that morning, and was not turned on again until 3 o'clock in the afternoon, while the reservoir on the hill near where the fire commenced was empty. The judge goes on to say that the fire brigade was a half-starved, ill-managed, rotten institution, entirely destitute of discipline and proper organization. What might be expected from it, even with abundant water, appears from the statement that the entire brigade had only one hook, with about six feet

of chain, and ropes so rotten that they broke at the first pull. It had no buckets, hatchets or fire escapes, and no one had authority to pull down buildings in the path of the flames: in short, was practically useless. The outcome is likely to be an entire reorganization on a basis of efficiency. Let us hope so.

A GOOD DEAL of well-founded apprehension exists with regard to the liability of a great fire at San Francisco at any moment. It is well known that not only is there a preponderance of wooden buildings in the city, rendered unusually combustible by the long dry season, but that the fire department has not kept pace with the growth of the town, and while good so far as it goes, is wholly inadequate to cope with a large fire under existing conditions. The *Examiner* of San Francisco freely calls attention to the serious condition of affairs, and asserts that the city has relatively less protection from fire than it had ten years ago. British companies carry the bulk of the risk in that city, and would do well, in connection with the other companies, to give due consideration to the conflagration hazard involved. A great San Francisco fire may speedily have a place on the page of history with the great fires of Chicago, Boston and the two St. Johns.

IT IS A WELL-KNOWN fact that the accident insurance companies on this side of the Atlantic are far in advance, at least most of them, of those in Great Britain in the matter of liberal policy provisions. A gratifying indication that a more rational policy is likely to prevail over there, however, comes to us in the announcements recently made by the Palatine of Manchester, which transacts accident as well as fire insurance. The company proposes to cover, at the standard rate, without unnecessary conditions, all kinds of accidents excepting death or disablement from intentional self injury, or suicide, or if caused by war, usurped power, or invasion. The company adopts the American plan of paying the full amount of the policy for the loss of two limbs or both eyes, and half the amount in case of loss of one limb or one eye. It also gives the sixth year's insurance free where no claim for the preceding five years has been made. The Palatine has a wide awake management, and will undoubtedly meet with deserved success on its new lines.