



# INSURANCE SOCIETY

"Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labour and to wait."

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The Manager of a Life Insurance Company who boasts a successful experience of many years in Canada, very earnestly endeavored to impress us with the idea that there was no field for an Insurance Journal in Canada. At the next town but one we visited, one of the first men we met began to abuse Life Insurance in general and the Company of this Manager in particular. We venture to assert that if the abjurer of Life Insurance will read INSURANCE SOCIETY faithfully during the coming year, he will not only change his mind concerning this means of providing for old age or for survivors, but will be very likely to seek Life Insurance in the Company he now abuses so roundly; if he does not go quite so far as this, he will see that there are overbalancing arguments against his ideas, and so, Life Insurance, if it has not one disciple the more, will have one detractor the less.

Outside the Insurance Press proper, no body of men have contributed so much of value to the literature and the practice of Fire Insurance as the members of the Fire Underwriters Association of the Northwest, from whose Secretary, Mr. G. W. Hayes of Milwaukee, we have received a neatly bound volume containing the report of the proceedings at the eleventh annual meeting of that Association, which we have read with very great interest and pleasure.

These gentlemen, believing that Fire Insurance is a profession affording ample scope for their keenest observation and study, and satisfactory compensation for their labour and energies, seek to adorn it by appropriate efforts and literature.

The first of their meetings was held some dozen years ago with closed doors, because the members were doubtful as to the reception which their utterances would meet at the hands of the Managers of the Companies on the one hand and of the Agents on the other, as well as of the criticisms of the insurance press, but the meeting whose record is before us was not only open to even the daily press, but was attended by the Presidents and Managers of some of the foremost Companies doing business on this continent, all of whom expressed their admiration of the conduct and attainments of the members, and one of whom, Mr. D. A. Heald, President of the Home Insurance Company of New York, delivered a very eloquent address on Fire Underwriting as a profession; another, Mr. Alfred G. Baker, President of the Franklin Insurance Company of Philadelphia, presented a prize of one hundred dollars for the best essay on the evils that oppress Fire Underwriting, especially adverse legislation, and the best remedies therefor.

The members of this Association are recognised authorities on the subjects to which they severally give special attention, because their studies and observations are practical and thorough. This is one of the reasons why the Western States are the most profitable to the Fire Insurance Companies, and why so many of the inferior risks of that region have to seek insurance underground.

It would be of infinite benefit to the gentlemen who are to occupy positions of responsibility in connection with Fire Insurance in Canada, if they were to organise a similar association, the letter of Fair Play in our correspondence of this month shows that there is ample field for their studies. The growth of manufactures and the increase of insurable property would indicate that positions of trust and emolument will be open to those who are competent to fill them, and it is to be presumed that representatives of responsible companies will be sought amongst those who have taken the trouble to fit themselves for their duties.

It might not be altogether *infra dig.* of the managers if they not only encouraged the formation of such an association but attended some of its meetings and contributed to their interest and value; it certainly would ultimately prove to the advantage of their Companies.

## DEUTERONOMY XXII. 8.

*When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house if any man fall from thence.*

In the accounts of nearly every disastrous fire, we continue to find that its spread, and its destructive consequences were caused, by open hoistways, trap doors, or elevators. If we were to sum up the destruction to life, limb and property during the past year from this AVOIDABLE cause we should present such a bill against the criminally culpable proprietors as would lead to action by recommendation of the grand juries; but, inasmuch as the Fire Insurance Companies are the principal sufferers from the destruction of property by these causes it is surely within their province to tax them, either out of existence, or out of insurance, as they might easily and properly do by united action in reference thereto.

It is a matter of serious personal consideration, how far a man, whether he be a proprietor of a building or the manager of an insurance company, if he know of the presence of a danger, and take no steps for its removal, is morally or legally liable for the results of its continuance; the inner consciousness of a man must give him some uneasiness when he reads of the destruction of thousands of dollars worth of property by reason of the spread of fire through open hoistways, etc., or meets a cripple on the street who has fallen a victim to these cursed contrivances; but when he attends the funeral of a man or boy whose death is due to them, he must stand self-condemned of murder.

No man can plead ignorance in this respect, unless he is so densely stupid as to be unfit for anything savoring of responsibility; nor can any plead innocence, because