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A Severe Test of a Fire-Proofing Process.

THE Electric Fire Proofing Company of New York gave an exhibition recently in Boston, which, according to the *Standard*, was the "most convincing" demonstration of the possibilities in the direction of making wood fire-proof ever seen. The structure experimented on was 12 x 8, made of several kinds of woods, all previously treated by the fire-proof process. The interior was partly wainscotted and partly left with timbers exposed. Floors were planked. The building was erected on posts, leaving a clear space between floor and ground of two feet. A fire of soft pine and shavings, the materials all saturated with kerosene, was started beneath the floor at one corner, burning fiercely for half an hour. The after-inspection showed that the paint had been blistered and the clapboards partly carbonized. Two more fires were then started, one on the outside and the other on the interior. After burning some time, a gallon of kerosene was thrown on the interior fire, causing a heat so intense as to melt the window glass, which ran into lumps. After these fires were spent, a careful examination showed that the interior was blackened and carbonized to a depth of $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch, but the building remained apparently as solid as before the fire. Superintendent Cabot, of the Boston Board of Fire Underwriters, under whose supervision the test was made, stated that it was "without question the very best method of preparing wood to resist fire" that had ever been brought to his notice.

The process consists of forcing by hydraulic pressure a chemical solution into the substance of the wood or other material. The compound used is said to be fixed and permanent in its nature. Lapse of time or difference of climate does not affect it.

The cost of applying this "fire-proofing" to wood is from \$25 to \$30 per 1,000 feet.

A State Life Insurance Scheme.

A SCHEME is being agitated in Florida for the establishment of a State Life Insurance Bureau. Its promoters claim that Florida will thus hold for home investment hundreds of thousands of dollars which now go elsewhere, and that profits to the tune of several thousand dollars annually would be made which would materially assist in the reduction of taxes. There are apparently no inducements held out to secure business or to do away with the fact, that part of the premiums is to be used in paying taxes, for after all this last feature is the main object of the proposed Bureau. These schemes of paying public debts with private funds, and incidentally providing fat offices for the movers, take various shapes as the occasion permits, or the fertility of the mover's brain suggests, sometimes as life insurance, as in Florida, or, as fire insurance, as we have seen in Toronto, and other Canadian cities and towns recently. In an editorial on this subject the Underwriter N. Y. says:—"There are very few of the comforts of civilization that could not, in an ideal social life, be secured for less money than we pay for them. But we lose in the exchange something which to us means more than mere dollars and cents, our personal liberty. And so this Florida scheme has nothing in it attractive, and nothing to which any intelligent legislator should give a minute's thought."

What it was all about.

THE dispute between England and Nicaragua, though a small affair in itself, at one time developed a situation which looked to be threatening serious difficulty with the United States. Nicaragua is on the neck of land between the continents of North and South America. It is a hot place, partially civilized, peopled by a very restless population, whose heads are never free from revolutionary schemes, business being a secondary consideration, and business principles little understood. During a revolution the British Consul at Corinto became obnoxious to the moving spirits, who caused him to be made prisoner, and confiscated his belongings, looting also the property of the few British traders who do business in that region, as representatives of English importers of tropical goods. When asked to make compensation for these outrages and stealings, the Nicaraguans declined, having a notion that they would be protected against England