



INSURANCE SOCIETY

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

AND FIREMEN'S REVIEW.

Office: 102 St. Francois Xavier St. }
Vol. I., No. 9.

MONTREAL, SEPTEMBER 20, 1881.

} SUBSCRIPTION:
\$1.50 PER ANNUM.

The Office of
"INSURANCE SOCIETY"

IS IN THE

EXCHANGE BANK CHAMBERS,

No. 102 ST. FRANCOIS XAVIER STREET, MONTREAL.

Annual Subscription (in advance)	-	-	\$1.50
Single Copies (in numbers less than 100)	-		0.15

There are several cities that would do well to follow the example of London, Ontario, and form a Local Board. From what we can learn, Halifax and Hamilton are two notable cases, fire insurance having come down to a sort of grab game in these highly respectable places. However, the insurance agents of these two places have a very good excuse for not entering into amicable relations with each other, for no very great encouragement is given them by the Head Offices in Montreal. That they are allowed and have even been recommended to form Local Boards may be true, but example and practice is better than precept. There is, however, some consolation to be derived from the activity of London, for where the branches blossom the roots cannot be dead, and if one withered spray has budded into life, there is hope that many more will yet show signs of revived vitality.

Winnipeg has a Local Board, and has had one for some time past, and from all accounts it seems to work well. Rates are good in the prairie city, and so is the moral hazard. We are not aware of any higher moral tone among the people of that locality than is usual in a city of its size, and yet from an insurance standpoint Winnipeg is a moral place. Old buildings don't burn down when new ones are required in their places. Timber is valuable in that unwooden country, so the building quietly picks itself up and rolls off to some vacant space that will fit its dimensions, and the only anxiety that the insurance agent has, is, that he finds it difficult to keep track of the locality of his risks, or finds a hazard which he had taken in some locality where his lines were well scattered, quietly nestling up against a ten thousand dollar risk in some other part of the town. However, time will cure this erratic behaviour.

A correspondent writes: "several farmers in this neighbourhood have been burnt out during the month, losing, in many cases not only their barns and out-buildings, but the whole of their crops, caused by steam threshing machines. Cannot something be done to protect farmers from these travelling incendiaries." The matter of protection in this case seems to lie in the hands of the farmers themselves, for without their patronage the perambulating thresher would not be a profitable investment for anybody's capital, and consequently an unused article. We were always under the impression that the steam thresher was a blessing and not a curse, but like every luxury and labor-saving contrivance, it has its accompanying evil. Perhaps our correspondent has, with the accustomed generosity of insurance men, been persuaded to grant a permit for a steam threshing machine without any extra charge, and has burnt his finger, and naturally feels a trifle sore on that point. Charge extra for all additional hazards, that is the only way to get square with them.

The *Chronicle* has for some months been very ably combating the reward system of the American Board of Underwriters, and has maintained that the practice of offering rewards for the conviction of incendiaries, by the Board, is, although legal, immoral. It claims that the Government, and it alone, should deal with such matters. We are inclined to agree with the theory ventilated by the *Chronicle*. Granted a perfect government, a perfect system of police, unimpeachable officials, and an earnest desire on the part of all concerned to have justice done, and we concede that the reward system would be perfectly superfluous. But these things are not thus, and unless some private interest sets the machinery of justice in motion, and applies at the proper time the proper amount of *anti-friction* oil, it is found that wheels do not move so rapidly, rust impedes and the machine falls short of its work. In the number for the first of September, the *Chronicle* touches a blister with its cartoon. Over-Insurance is represented in the person of Mephis—no, let us be plain—the devil, who is instigating an incendiary to his work of crime. The legend below runs thus: "The Accessory before the Fact—How much reward for him?" This hits home to those who by loose inspection and reckless underwriting, have granted a liberal premium to incendiarism.