

INDEPENDENT ORDER OF FORESTERS.—This fraternal society, at the convention of the Supreme Court held recently at Atlantic City, N.J., decided to issue instalment and term policies, which latter is practically all the members are getting, as the certificates carry neither cash value, paid-up value, nor extended insurance, no matter how many years have been paid, the only solatium being payment in event of partial or total permanent disability, and cessation of monthly payments on attaining the age of seventy years.

The rates charged by the society since 1898 seem to be sufficient for what it gives, but, as pointed out by us in a previous article, the extravagance in management (the general account being overdrawn over \$400,000), and the poor judgment in investing the funds as evidenced by the facts that, on the 31st December last, it had \$68,563 *interest overdue and unpaid*, on ledger assets of \$8,126,595 and its Temple building investment paying only $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1 p.c., and its Union Trust stock 3.65 p.c. These two investments comprising about \$3,000,000 of the funds of the Order—does not augur very well for its continued prosperity. The gain in membership has been steadily declining for the past three years. The actual net gain in 1904 being only 6,384.

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THE BRITISH CHANNEL FLEET has arrived at Swinewund, on the German coast on the Baltic sea, where it is reported the German fleet is to give the British vessels a friendly welcome. Evidently the Baltic is not *mare clausum*, a closed sea, as many have affirmed. It is very gratifying to hear of this harmony between the old land and Germany.

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THE EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.—The directors are reported to have decided to abolish the pension of \$25,000 granted some time ago to Mrs. Hyde, widow of the founder of this gigantic, flourishing and strong institution. Many will consider the widow of the society's founder entitled to a pension, though probably not needed.

The falling off in the society's business has been small considering the notoriety it has attained and the persistent attacks on its former directors.

A thorough investigation is about to be instituted by a committee appointed by the Legislature of New York, and at the same time a suit will be presented against the chief officials which will be conducted largely, as a fishing expedition. It would have been more reasonable to have awaited the report of the investigating committee before commencing this suit as then, either evidence would have been available or its absence would have caused the proposed suit to be abandoned.

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THE MAYOR'S CHAIN.—The handsome and very valuable chain worn on official occasions by the

Mayor of Montreal was missing for a length of time this summer. Whether this chain was "lost, stolen or strayed," was discussed with much earnestness in civic circles, indeed, the topic was debated by the Press all over Canada. It was suggested that, if this chain had vagrant habits it was high time it was out under restraint. While the mystery was calling for a Sherlock Holmes to clear it up a city paper happened to penetrate the Laurentian hills where acting Mayor Couture was enjoying a holiday. He came to Montreal to investigate where he discovered that his messenger instead of returning the chain to the City Hall as directed placed it in the worthy Alderman's safe, from which place of retreat the chain was transferred to its home in the City Hall vault.

A chain so valuable, both intrinsically and from historic associations, should be in charge of one official whose duty it would be to see it was duly returned and locked up.

The chain has many links on which, by the way, the names of the mayors of this city should be successively engraved.

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OFFICE HOURS.—The remarks we made recently on punctual attendance at the office by principals and the staff met with general approval, they received strong endorsement. Never before was strict attention to office hours so desirable, so necessary, indeed, as in these days; for never before was the machinery of business so intricate an adjustment of an infinite number of parts. As the least part of a watch being out of order spoils the works, so one member of the business machine whose movements are erratic, who is not on hand when the daily routine requires him to be, disturbs the machine's regularity. The telephone system, no doubt, is very tyrannical, but it is *here to stay* and we must adapt ourselves to the situation it creates. This system presumes and requires that every business man keeps in line so far as hours are concerned with other business men. Each man is now understood to be on hand when called. Some uniformity in office hours is now necessary and the non-punctual person is apt to be somewhat of a nuisance—he doesn't keep step with the march.

As for officials, there should be what lawyers call a "rule absolute," making it obligatory to keep hours as strictly as a clock. Exceptions should not be made, nor are they made where the staff is under wholesome discipline. A distinct injury for life is done to a youth who is allowed to wander into the office with regular irregularity. Strict observance of business hours is one of the notes of the age which cannot be ignored with impunity.

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PUNCTUAL HABITS ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS.—One of our best known business men is credited with