

**A Compilation of Matter relating to the Fire  
Marshal System as a check on the  
Fire Waste of the Country.**

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There are few, apparently, who stop to consider what an appalling loss is sustained by the country from year to year through the destruction of property by fire. The reason for this may be found in the fact that much of the property destroyed, being insured, the individual loss is not felt, but they forget that while the loss to the individual may be made up, yet the Insurance Company paying the loss is only the medium by which the indemnity to the individual is collected from the whole community and that the property having gone out of existence, the country must of necessity, be, by so much, the loser.

The causes of fires are numerous, and many fires could be avoided if we had a law clothing the proper official with the necessary authority to thoroughly investigate all fires, placing the responsibility where it rightfully belongs. The law, such as exists notably in the States of Massachusetts and Maryland, known as the Fire Marshal law, appears to be what is required. Germany, Denmark, France and Russia have a system of investigating fires in all the principal Cities, and as will be seen, a great many Cities of the United States are working in the same direction as Massachusetts and Maryland, and in London, England, the Fire Marshal system has been agitated for many years, showing conclusively the trend of thought and action in the various countries of the world on the subject. Following will be found selections from various sources and authorities bearing on the fire waste and the Fire Marshal system, which it is hoped will be of interest to all who care to investigate the subject and inform themselves.

Mr. Seneca Jones of Hamilton, was deputed by the Mutual Fire Underwriters Association to look into the Fire Marshal system while in Boston in May 1898, and to report to the Association. The information obtained is given in the shape of the following questions and answers.

Information relating to the Department of State Fire Marshal, State of Massachusetts, U.S., Charles W. Witcomb, Esq. Fire Marshal

1—Q—Date when the Department of Fire Marshal was established ?

1—A—Bill became a law June 1st, 1894, to go into operation July 1st, 1894, thirty days after passage of law.