

# The Chronicle

## Insurance & Finance.

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### Fraternal Society Exhibits.

An Ontario correspondent informs us, that, after having regularly paid his dues to the Royal Arcanum for twenty years he has been notified of an assessment which is over 300 per cent. larger than ever before. This enormous advance, from \$60 to \$190, is made when he is well advanced in life and naturally anxious to lessen his financial burdens.

Another correspondent, a bank officer in Manitoba, narrates the case of a widow in his vicinity whose husband was a member in good standing of the Independent Order of Foresters. She affirms that, all the necessary evidence to prove her claim for the amount of her late husband's policy has been sent by the local agent to headquarters but, though a long time has elapsed, no notice has been taken of the claim, receipt of the papers relating to the claim has not been even acknowledged.

### Not Credible.

There is an Italian proverb which may be interpreted, "If not true it is well told." This is applied to statements whose lack of veracity has to be politely questioned. A contemporary publishes a letter to which the Italian proverb may well be applied with marked emphasis on, "If not true." It is affirmed that a State agent wrote his company that the Deputy Insurance Commissioner of the State had informed him that the department proposed to make an official examination of the company on a certain date. All that would be done would be to visit the head office, and dine with the staff. After this an official report would be made for which the company would have to pay \$300, a sum far less than the cost of a systematic examination. That any Deputy Insurance Commissioner would request such a letter to be written is incredible. A public officer who was rogue enough, would be cunning enough to avoid advertising his rascality.

**Barn Fires.** The question of barn fires is being discussed more fully just now than any other topic relating to insurance. The situation is stated very graphically by the president of the Atlantic-Birmingham Insurance Company, who says: "I do not charge the average farmer as being a bad man, but if he wants to be bad he will have less scruples and more opportunity to burn his barn than anything I know of.

"There are no household gods to be looked after, nor any curious and ever-present women and children to detect the incipient fire and put it out. Then there may be a lot of insurance on corn that has already been fed away and nothing but shucks left; yet the insurance company will likely pay for the absent corn! Then there are a lot of worn-out farm tools, and a lot of old ramshackle harness, buggies and wagons, all of which suddenly become very valuable when the fire comes. It strikes me that the farmer must be a powerfully good man to resist the temptation of burning up an old barn on which he has as much or more insurance than it and the contents are actually worth when he can do it so easily and charge it up to 'lightning.' It may be that more lightning rods or better ones might reduce barn losses actually caused from lightning, as would likely be the case with the dwellings in connection therewith, but even if such improvements are made I am inclined to be skeptical that barn losses would be materially thereby reduced. The lightning rod, however absolutely perfect it may be, will never reach the root of the trouble; which, in my opinion, is more from 'lighting'—accidental or otherwise—than from 'lightning,' and the only remedy, I think, that is left the underwriter is to increase the rate to cover the risk, or put barns on his prohibited list."

The last few words in the above which are the same in substance as we published in a recent issue, express all that needs to be said from the insurance standpoint.