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PREVENTION OF FIRE LOSS.

Losses by fire so far as reported indicate that the total loss for 1901 in the United States will touch very close to \$100,000,000. If it does not actually exceed those figures, it is really appalling in the vast property waste that it comprehends, and the question of preventing a considerable portion of it is constantly becoming a more serious one, especially as present conditions are not calculated to inspire confidence in the solvency of not a few fire insurance companies. Edward Atkinson, the well-known statistician, declares that, if the excess of cost in conducting insurance companies be added to the actual fire loss along with the excess of cost in sustaining water supplies and fire departments, the total will be a sum \$50,000,000 a year in excess of the normal cost of maintaining the United States government in times of peace (omitting pensions and interest), and is fully equal to the government's cost at the present time subject to the expenditures that grow out of the Spanish war. So much for the loss itself.

Can some of it be prevented in any way? What portion of it is due to inadequate fire protection or to actual carelessness on the part of those most interested? Mr. Atkinson believes that by far the greater part of the aggregate loss is incurred in a relatively very small number of large establishments, each of which might be protected and made very much safer if only the owners' attention was sharply called to the matter by advancing the cost of insurance. In other words, under the present premium rates, owners have a sense of security after their policies are written that breeds carelessness and often indifference. Mr. Atkinson suggests that losses by fire should be analyzed and classified so as to separate the number and amount of the losses on the large establishments from the much more numerous small losses, and the proposed analysis of the large firms should give a complete record of the cause and the course of each.

But additional safeguards in construction are of course essential. If the word "fireproof" is ever to possess any meaning in its construction, and on this point Mr. Atkinson cites the following:

"Since the Cripple Creek fire in London in 187, leading British architects and engineers have formed a Fire Protective association, comprising at present 50 members, each of whom pays a guinea a year. They make complete tests of all new devices, notably everything pertaining to what is called fireproof construction. Their tests are judicial. Their endorsement carries very great weight. Hence, although the charge for testing is heavy, including the printing of test reports, promoters of new methods and new devices who themselves feel confident of the merit of their inventions cheerfully pay the charges, while promoters who are merely floating patents or who have no genuine confidence in their own devices, never apply; the fact of their refusal or omission to call for tests, standing against them with men of sense. This undertaking is not apparently sustained by the insurance companies of England, who to a considerable extent proceed on the theory that it is not the function of the underwriter to aid in preventing loss by fire."

In this country, however, the underwriters are often more interested than the business and owners, and they are constantly endeavoring to secure reforms that will prevent loss. But the architects and engineers surely have a field of effort open to them that they ought to hasten to occupy.

DIMENSIONS OF HEAVEN.

A mathematician has figured out the size of heaven, taking his basis data from the scriptures. To add that the mathematician who would spend his

time this way is a chump seems hardly necessary. His conclusions possess no possible value, and hence in this connection are omitted, says the Ledger. The ancient writers know not so much as the size of the earth or the distance to the planets. They did not know they were living on a globe which they expressed as flat. They were moved by great ideas, which they expressed as best they could, but when they took to dealing with figures, either as to the height of man, or his years, spreadly they were over their depths.

The fact might as well be a knowledge, since it is a fact palpable to intelligence, that there is no whit of human knowledge concerning heaven. Whether it is a place or a condition may dawn on the mind later, but not this side the grave. The strict hell-tween the cradle and the grave has been thoroughly exploded. At the latter spot, investigation finds a wall impenetrable. That there is a future state of happiness, faith accepts willingly and gladly. To define this state and name its metes and bounds, is an absurdity. To be a great mathematician, yet not foolish, has been shown by many eminent men to be not only possible, but common.

The figure faddist is anything in a thousand ways. He will let you know, while you wait, how much a copper cent would amount to in a million, he caudates at compound interest, and from this press upon you the necessity for having the cent. He will tell you how many leaves of bread you could buy for your cigar money, how big a steak these leaves would make, and the number of pounds of tins they would produce if put on the inside of the finished. He will examine a few hundred criminals, applying various mechanical devices to the wicked ones, ascertaining the length of their ears and their tastes in the matter of whiskers, and then in the name of science he will promulgate a list of not conveying not a word of information with which the constable of a cow county would have to be familiar before having sense enough to be a constable.

However, the fellow with the nerve to set forth the dimensions of heaven is unique. According to him, there will be 100 rooms sixteen feet square for each inhabitant of this earth and fifty more worlds just like it, provided the worlds last for a thousand centuries to come. From all of which it may be concluded that the fellow has fallen under the spell of his own huzzing wheel.

PORTLAND IN EARNEST.

The Portland East Oregonian says: Portland's chamber of commerce is earnest in the matter of the improvement of the Columbia river. That organization has formulated the only considered plan that has yet been presented for the possession of this work. It involves the deepening of the river below Portland to a depth to accommodate the larger vessels now coming into use and opening the upper river so far as Lewiston to the passage of boats.

This is the plan that has been urged by the East Oregonian for months past and should appeal to all Oregonians as meeting the requirements of the situation.

The claims of the people of the Columbia valley are thereby recognized justly, as to all sections. The region drained by the Columbia includes 245,000 square miles of territory of which about 180,000 is east of Celilo, when the first obstruction is met in coming up from Portland. Below that point, the river is open to commerce, and substantial benefits have accrued to the people in the form of reduction of freight rates, ranging from 50 to 70 per cent. But the majority of the people of the great valley of the Columbia are denied the benefits that would come with the proper recognition of the waterway by the federal government.

The Portland Chamber of Commerce's plan now proposed is to combine the two projects—upper and lower river improvements—in one, and to urge them confidently before the river and harbor committee of the national house. To this end, according to the East Oregonian's information, the chamber has inaugurated a strong movement looking toward the presentation of the scheme to the representatives and senators, and will put forth efforts to bring matters to a head within the next two or three years.

In the movement Eastern Oregon and Washington and Northern Idaho may well join heartily, and supplement the Portland chamber's members in every manner possible. Furthermore, the plan should enlist sup-

port in Astoria and tend to heat the difference between that town and Portland. In Astoria, be wise, her citizens will fall in line and cooperate with Portland.

Sympathy is with the young man whose body lies on a slab at the morgue. Poor, misguided sailor! Unfortunately, Mike Wyrost was compelled to see his death. His bullet went astray. He should have effectively emptied three chambers of his revolver, but not the successor of three other participants desecrating of his unerring aim.

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ART AND GRUB.

Dispatches state that an artist has just starved to death in Belfast. This is in some respects a hard world, but no artist of ability should have been permitted to starve to death in it. His pictures have been accepted and hung in exhibitions and academies to enter which would have satisfied a moderate ambition. Then why did he starve? We confess to a total lack of information.

The artist is the medium through which beauty reaches the senses. He catches the spirit of the mountain, the sea, the forest the very air. He impresses nature to the man of grosser mold, while he delights the one who with perception as keen as his own, is able to reduce his emotions to canvass. The creator of beauty, or, rather, the artist who makes beauty tangible and places it in an exhibition, enrapturing and uplifting is as essential to the progress of the race as the man who makes a coat or lays a wall. The bad artist, the mediocre, can find something better to do. He can devise signs for the country fence or decorate the farmer's barn a brilliant red. The real artist, the genius, has a right to support from the intellectual world to the happiness of which he is a contributor. That he should starve in a garret is a shame to civilization, not the only incident by the way, of which civilization has a right to be ashamed.

THE SPIEL OF THE FUTURE.

This question has been worrying many people who fear that the real supply is becoming exhausted, but there is no need to worry, however, as a substitute has been discovered in petroleum. In nearly all of Nature's products we find that as soon as one material becomes scarce another is discovered to take its place. There is one exception and that is Hugel's Stomach Bitters. It is Nature's own remedy for all stomach, liver and bowel complaints and during the past fifty years it has been impossible to make a better medicine. It cures indigestion, dyspepsia, constipation, nervousness and indigestion, fever and ague. If you have never tried it, do so today. It cannot help but to cure you. Our private list stands in favor of the bottle.

Captain Frank Schofield, of the Ninth infantry, threatened in turn thirty-two per cent men who tried to base him at West Point. Naturally the Filipinos come easy to the captain, and he is making a record.

SAYS HE WAS TORTURED. "I suffered such pain from corns I could hardly walk," writes H. Robinson, Hillsborough, Ill. "But Buckden's Anker Salve completely cured them." Acts like magic on corns, bunions, cuts, sores, scalds, burns, blisters, shingles, perfect healer of skin diseases and piles. Cure guaranteed by Hart's Drugstore. Price 25 cents.

In the account of a marriage ceremony at the national capital the statement is made that the groom presented the bride with a dog collar of pearls. Did he also donate the dog?

CHILD WORTH MILLIONS.

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One of Boston's rich women got a lot of art exhibits through the various house free of duty by claiming they were for a public museum. Now they are in her house, seen only by her friends, and there is no telling who the laugh is on until the Treasury department is through with the plan.

A FRENCHMAN'S CROSS CALL.

"I took to try straits although every time asked and every time was riddled with pain," writes W. Bellamy, a benevolent Frenchman of Burlington, Iowa. "I was weak and pale, without any appetite and all run-down. As I was about to give up, I got a bottle of Electric Bites and, after taking it, I felt as well as I ever did in my life." Weak, sickly, run-down people always gain new life, strength and vigor from their use. Try them. Satisfaction guaranteed by Hart's Drugstore. Price 50 cents.

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