

THE MARCH FIRE LOSS.

The losses by fire in the United States and Canada during the month of March, as compiled from the records of the *New York Journal of Commerce*, aggregated \$18,786,400, as compared with \$25,512,750 in March last year and \$17,511,000 in March, 1913. The losses by fire since the beginning of the year continue to show considerable reduction from the previous figures. The record for the first quarter of 1915 is \$51,928,250, as against \$70,461,650 charged against the first three months of 1914.

The following table gives a comparison of the losses for the first three months of this year with those of 1914 and 1913, together with the monthly loss for the balance of 1914 and 1913:

	1913.	1914.	1915.
January	\$20,193,250	\$23,204,700	\$20,060,600
February	22,084,600	21,744,200	13,081,250
March	17,511,000	25,512,750	18,786,400
Tl 3 mos. ..	\$59,788,850	\$70,461,650	\$51,928,250
April	16,738,250	17,700,800	.....
May	17,225,850	15,507,800	.....
June	24,942,700	29,348,000	.....
July	20,660,900	17,539,800	.....
August	21,180,700	11,765,650	.....
September	17,919,300	14,383,050	.....
October	14,932,750	14,004,700	.....
November	15,207,600	21,372,750	.....
December	16,126,450	23,507,150	.....
Tl. for y'r. ..	\$224,723,350	\$235,591,350	.....

There were during March this year some 333 fires each causing an estimated property damage of \$10,000 or over.

The first quarters of both 1913 and 1914 showed abnormally high fire losses, says the *Journal of Commerce*, and the reduction for the first quarter of 1915 puts it back to an almost normal figure. It is too early to predict what 1915 will bring forth but underwriters are much encouraged by their experience so far this year.

MANITOBA'S FIRE LOSSES.

"The total losses by fire in Manitoba during the first three months of 1915 amount to \$121,615," says Mr. Lindback, fire commissioner, of Manitoba. "This is \$300,000 less destroyed this year than has been the case for the last four years, during the same period. In other words, had we been able to keep our fire losses in the first three months of those four years at the same figures, we should to-day be \$1,200,000 better off."

"In 1914 during the first quarter our fire losses figured \$404,312, of which \$256,006 occurred in the city of Winnipeg, and \$148,306 in the rest of the province. The result of these heavy losses in those three months caused a realization among the public of the need of action."

"Meetings were held indirectly upholding my contention for improved inspections and of the need of educating the public as to fire prevention. It also inaugurated the cleaning up week which more than any other agency has helped to diminish our fire losses, so that in this city for the first three months of the year we have only burned \$80,374 worth of property against \$256,006 in the same months in 1914."

The Bank of England continued its official rate of discount yesterday at 5 per cent.

FIRE INSURANCE SURVEYS.

A lengthy correspondence has recently been taking place in the *London Post Magazine* on the subject of the advisability of the establishment of Boards of Surveyors, somewhat similar to the system familiar to the fire insurance companies on this continent. Mr. H. S. Angas writes from the branch of the British Dominions General Insurance Company at Vancouver, pointing out that the system adopted here does not develop the objections which apparently many of the British insurance critics fear. Mr. Angas points out that to the Boards here are attached staffs of competent surveyors, in many instances, specialists in their branch, and not only do these surveyors compile reports and surveys, but they issue rates (excluding certain exceptions) for every commercial, manufacturing and special risk according to the tariffs laid down by the associations. But this system, Mr. Angas points out, does not deprive the office surveyor or inspector of his individuality, as is apparently feared by some of the British critics. Despite the fact that the Board survey, report upon and rate the majority of premises, each company has its travelling surveyor-inspector, whose duty it is, not to report in detail as to each feature of construction, additional charge, etc., but to ascertain whether or not the risk is one on which his own company is entitled to remain, what retention should be advised, and any other individual merits or demerits.

Mr. Angas also points out in reference to further criticisms that there is no reason for a junior to lose interest in his business because he cannot become a surveyor for his company. He can be an inspector-surveyor, and if he wishes to reach the heights of his profession through efficiency in every branch of his work, he must still train himself to gauge the value of a risk from an underwriting point of view through practical experience. The advantage of obviating varieties of opinions due to differing surveys is so marked and the saving in expense to the companies so great by the system of Board inspections that it would be impossible to contemplate any change in Canada.

VALUE OF PRIVATE PROTECTION.

The frame saw mill of a large plant in a small Canadian town took fire recently, and thanks to the excellent private protection, the loss was practically confined to the roof and the upper floor.

When the season of the year is considered, and there is still plenty of snow and ice in Quebec Province, also the fact that the building was 162 feet long, over 60 feet wide, three stories high and frame, the small loss is remarkable, and a good tribute to the excellence of the private protection.

On the other hand, the private arrangements have to be good, if the concern is to have a decent rate.—*Boston Standard*.

An insight into the depths of ignorance of the average Canadian newspaper man on technical subjects is given by a news story in the West's best daily paper, that life insurance premiums in a certain province last year were so much and payment for "losses" (!) so much. No wonder the public has weird ideas on the subject of insurance when stuff of that sort is seriously written for it.