FEBRUARY FIRE LOSS.

The fire loss of the United States and Canada for the month of February, as compiled from the records of the New York "Commercial Bulletin," shows a total of $21,010,500. The following table gives comparisons by months:

January	$11,755,300	$16,574,950	$15,032,800
February	15,427,000	13,992,000	21,010,500
Total	27,182,300	30,566,950	36,046,300

During February there were 221 fires of a greater destructiveness than $10,000 each. They may be classified as below:

$10,000 to $20,000	75
20,000 to 30,000	36
30,000 to 50,000	33
50,000 to 75,000	28
75,000 to 100,000	15
100,000 to 200,000	19
200,000 to 4,500,000	15
Total	221

The principal February fires were these:

Waterbury, Conn., general conflagration	$1,500,000
Dwight, Ill., Keely Institute	300,000
Wireton, Ill., heading machinery factory	300,000
Horton, Kan., railroad car works	250,000
Brooklyn, N. Y., carriage factory	300,000
Jersey City, N. J., freight piers	540,000
Paterson, N. J., general conflagration	4,500,000
Springfield, Ohio, factory building	955,000
Lafayette, Ind., dry goods store	240,000
Long Island City, N.Y., varnish works	225,000
Battle Creek, Mich. sanitarium	500,000

PLAIN TALK ABOUT RATES.

The fire insurance companies transacting business in Arkansas have raised or are about to raise their rates on certain classes of risks. One firm of general agents has issued a circular which puts the situation very plainly.

"The future of the insurance business in Arkansas has resolved itself into the following proposition: Get more money for the business or else quit. The agents, the insuring public and the companies are all vitally interested in the proposition—the insuring public more than the agents, and the agents more than the companies, for the companies can quit the business, realize on their securities and invest their money in a more profitable field of investment. With the insuring public the withdrawal of the security offered by the companies would seriously cripple the commerce of the State, and the agent would be left high and dry, with his business and his income gone. Therefore, the proposition affects us all; and the proposition stares us face to face—either get more money for the policies or quit."

Another firm of general agents have written to their agents to same effect, their circular reads:—

"The combined underwriting experience of the companies throughout the United States for the past several years has clearly demonstrated the fact that they have been selling their policies at considerably below cost, as the aggregate losses have been greatly in excess of the net premium receipts."

They go on to announce that rates must be advanced 25 per cent. on all stocks of merchandise, without exception, on all frame mercantile buildings, on all wood-workers, manufacturing risks and other special hazards. The Commercial Union has also issued a circular to its Arkansas agents stating that, "the unprecedented number and severity of fires compel serious consideration of the necessities confronting us." As there is no prospect of better conditions arising, the Company has decided to demand "an increase of 25 per cent. over existing rates on frame store buildings, stocks of merchandise, whether in frame or brick buildings, all manufacturing risks and other special hazards, unless these latter have within the past twelve months been rated upon schedules wherever obtained, but which have been approved by this office.

This advance must take effect upon receipt of this letter, and from such date we cannot accept business, whether in renewal of old risks or upon new risks, on any terms other than those above stated. The alternative is simple; we must have an increased income to meet the heavy drain of losses or it will be better for us to lose the business."

These circulars all anticipate a loss of business by some companies accepting risks at old rates, but they are all very decided in declaring that, as one of them says so plainly to agents, "Get more money for policies —or quit."

1801-1901. A CONTRAST.

AN INTERESTING AND INSTRUCTIVE REVIEW.

The monthly meeting of the Insurance and Actuarial Society of Glasgow was held on the evening of Friday the 21th inst., in the hall of the Philosophical Society of Glasgow, Bath street, the chair being occupied by the president, Mr. N. B. Gunn, F.F.A., F.I.A., manager of the Scottish Amicable Life Assurance Society. There was a good attendance, and, after the ballot for the admission of four new members, the president introduced the lecturer for the evening. Mr. David Paulin, F.F.A., F.R.S.E., manager of the Scottish Life Assurance Company (Limited), who delivered an address, entitled "1801-1900. A Contrast." Mr. Paulin, after describing the meagre actuarial attainment in 1801, gave an interesting account of the recent investigation by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries into the records of 60 life offices, dealing with 12 million years of life and 247,000 deaths. In treating of the progress of life assurance during the century, he stated that the life funds of all the British offices amounted to 240 millions, of which the share falling to Scottish offices was 84 millions, or more than one-third of the whole. The amount of assurances in force in Britain is 650 millions, of which 205 millions are held by Scottish offices. The National Debt, which in 1816 amounted to 900 millions, and required 30 millions for interest, is now only 705 millions, with an interest charge of less than 20 millions; while the wealth of the nation is nearly eight times greater. The Napoleonic wars, though a sore burden at the time, resulted in the extension of the commerce and shipping of the nation, and had much to do with awakening the faculties and dispelling the lethargy