spread your risks and do not put all your eggs in one basket.

Every town and even village fancies itself a kind of El Dorado for the fire insurance companies, and asserts in the most positive manner that it is being fleeced or robbed to pay for losses in other places.

It is quite common to hear city fathers call the insurance companies extortionists, and their rates outrageous, but, after all, "abuse is no argument," and there are some very stubborn facts which go to prove that for some thirty years the profits of fire insurance in Canada have been so moderate as to require a strong microscope to discover them. If it seems strange to certain aldermen, it is none the less true that those who sell fire insurance are like those who sell grain or produce, and desire to make a profit, not being philanthropists, but yet are quite willing to bargain upon fair terms. Let the different municipalities act upon the lessons taught by experience, and pointed out by Mr. Griswold and other capable experts; follow out instructions as to water mains, fire brigades, electric wiring, construction of buildings, etc., and we will venture to say the companies will meet them as regards rates, but no threats of taxation or of starting municipal insurance will induce the companies to shut their eyes to past lessons, and do business at a loss—if they know it.

THE GENERAL ACCIDENT ASSURANCE CORPORATION, LIMITED, OF PERTH, SCOTLAND.

We understand the above Corporation contemplate opening a branch in Canada. We give below a few items taken from the report for the year ending 31st December, 1903, presented to the shareholders at their meeting held on 14th inst., at Perth, Scotland:

Net premiums, $1,312,395, as compared with $1,156,775 in 1902. Total income, $1,363,625. After payment of all claims and expenses, etc., there was a balance of $151,895 from Revenue Account. The reserve fund, including reserve for unexpired risks, amounts to $650,000, and the total assets to $1,379,675, in addition to $1,500,000 of capital at call.

THE CANADIAN MILLERS MUTUAL FIRE INSURANCE CO.

The 25th annual report presented at the meeting held in Hamilton on the 20th January last, gives the premium income for the year 1903 as $24,285.95, the losses for the same period were $5,735.90 on two risks, and reinsurances, rebates, refunds to policyholders and all other expenses totalled $8,270.31.

BANK STATEMENT FOR FEBRUARY, 1904.

Considering how seriously the general business arrangements of the country were obstructed in February by the snow blockades on the railways and rural highways, it would have not been surprising had these adverse conditions been reflected in the month's bank statement. This, however, was not the case, as the movements of bank business were active and extensive, in some respects more than usually so for February. The contrast, indeed with January is very striking. In January last, there were no changes in the items that are directly affected by active business to an amount exceeding half a million, but in February there were some considerable changes.

The increase of circulation in February has become a normal condition, it is connected with the needs of the lumbering interest to some extent. In the past three years the increases of circulation in February were as follows, contrasted with the change in the preceding January:

	1904.	1903.	1902.	1901.
	$	$	$	$
Jan.....	d. 5,566,179	d. 5,533,157	d. 5,786,259	d. 5,732,940
Feb.....	i. 762,970	i. 705,511	i. 861,465	i. 880,636

The difference between these two months, as regards the note issues, presents a contrast which is not found in any other successive months in the year. In January there is a decline in the circulation to extent of close upon 10 per cent., whereas in February the movement is the other way as the note issues advance in amount between 1 and 2 per cent. It is quite a fallacy to affirm that the banks are "full of money," as one writer recently affirmed, because they have a large stock of their own notes on hand which are ready to meet demands for cash. It may so happen that those who desire discounts or loans have no use for the notes issued by their bankers. If a merchant needs foreign exchange for remittance, it would be a mockery to tender him notes. From the reduction of $4,722,253 in the amount due from Banks in the United Kingdom, and of $2,369,120 in the amount due from foreign banks elsewhere, the aggregate decline in these balances being $7,091,373 in February, it is evident that the demand last month was chiefly for money of a different kind to ordinary currency.

Between the end of October, 1903, and end of February last, the banks redeemed circulation to extent of $12,744,368, and their deposits in Canada have only increased to extent of $3,245,000, while their discounts and current loans in Canada have increased to extent of $8,804,524. These changes represent movements of business on a considerable scale of a nature calling for no ordinary managerial skill.

The change in current loans and discounts in Canada last month was from $384,754,452 to $389,627,686, an increase of $4,873,234, as compared with an in-