

fires, is, of course, mere theorizing. Past experience has shown that fire losses increase in times of financial stringency. A study of the tables show that from 1803 to 1897 there was a marked decrease in the losses. From 1803 to 1895 property losses averaged one hundred and fifty millions, then the loss dropped to about one hundred and seventeen millions in 1896, and a little over one hundred and sixteen millions in 1897. The advance last year was sharp. The figures for 1898 are:—

Property loss, \$130,593,905, an increase of \$14,230,330; insurance loss, \$73,796,080, an increase of

\$7,073,935; number of fires, 69,904, an increase of 14,125; number of risks burned, 94,062, an increase of 19,322.

The year 1898 was not a profitable one for the fire insurance companies. Rates were demoralized more or less at various times all over the country. This was caused either by the competition of the underwriters themselves, or because of hostile legislation or the oppressive application of state anti-trust laws.

The following tables, covering a period of twenty-four years, form an interesting study, even for our Canadian readers:—

TOTAL MONTHLY LOSSES BY FIRE IN THE U. S. FOR 24 YEARS, 1875-1898.

MONTHS.	Total Property Loss For 24 Years, 1875-1898	Total Insurance Loss For 24 Years, 1875-1898	Total Property Loss in 1898	Total Insurance Loss in 1898	No. of Risks Burned in 1898
January.....	\$236,769,708	\$149,340,924	\$2,904,550	\$6,186,975	7,392
February.....	208,458,292	129,882,141	12,166,150	7,441,990	7,716
March.....	221,479,977	137,191,111	9,642,580	5,674,585	7,645
April.....	221,098,224	126,204,189	10,887,965	5,765,910	8,162
May.....	212,114,010	119,054,545	11,906,280	7,090,490	7,529
June.....	179,813,398	102,999,217	10,350,710	5,623,520	7,498
July.....	219,329,096	121,926,664	11,190,875	6,176,325	9,572
August.....	206,947,549	115,546,595	9,628,930	5,291,315	7,682
September.....	197,362,028	108,582,049	11,190,875	5,723,765	8,153
October.....	220,909,027	122,037,006	9,647,295	5,295,120	7,038
November.....	222,680,749	133,932,726	11,074,170	5,583,720	7,369
December.....	238,224,328	145,910,261	13,001,155	7,942,365	8,306
Totals.....	\$2,585,186,386	\$1,512,698,528	\$130,593,905	\$73,796,080	94,062

AGGREGATE ANNUAL LOSSES IN THE U. S. FOR 24 YEARS, 1875-1898.

MONTHS.	Aggregate Property Loss.	Aggregate Insurance Loss.	YEARS	Aggregate Property Loss.	Aggregate Insurance Loss.
1875.....	\$78,102,285	\$39,327,400	1888.....	110,885,665	63,965,724
1876.....	64,630,600	34,374,500	1889.....	123,046,833	73,679,465
1877.....	63,265,800	37,398,900	1890.....	108,993,792	65,015,465
1878.....	61,315,900	36,575,900	1891.....	143,764,967	90,576,918
1879.....	77,703,700	44,464,700	1892.....	151,516,988	93,511,936
1880.....	74,643,100	42,525,000	1893.....	167,544,370	105,994,577
1881.....	81,280,900	44,641,900	1894.....	140,006,484	89,574,699
1882.....	84,505,024	48,875,131	1895.....	142,110,233	84,689,030
1883.....	100,149,228	54,808,664	1896.....	118,737,420	73,903,800
1884.....	110,008,611	60,679,818	1897.....	116,354,570	66,722,140
1885.....	102,818,796	57,430,709	1898.....	130,593,905	73,796,080
1886.....	104,921,750	60,506,564	Totals.....	\$2,585,186,386	\$1,512,698,528
1887.....	120,283,055	69,659,508			

NUMBER OF FIRES EACH MONTH FOR TWENTY-THREE YEARS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, 1876-1898.—(1875 Not Reported.)

Years.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total.
1898*	5,737	5,968	5,891	6,202	5,218	5,430	6,909	5,799	5,770	5,243	5,586	6,151	69,904
1897*	4,302	3,708	4,386	4,255	4,278	4,411	4,860	4,729	4,982	4,946	5,145	5,777	55,779
1896*	3,614	3,004	3,278	3,409	3,316	3,293	3,814	3,882	3,475	3,478	3,502	4,480	42,545
1895*	2,963	3,307	3,041	3,133	2,886	2,819	3,042	2,764	3,449	4,342	3,090	3,167	38,003
1894*	3,223	2,872	2,976	2,750	2,652	2,467	3,822	3,117	2,811	2,814	3,022	3,023	35,549
1893*	3,176	2,392	2,635	2,707	2,443	2,484	3,714	3,541	3,105	3,067	2,992	2,942	35,188
1892*	2,762	2,116	2,532	2,464	2,018	1,973	2,782	2,369	2,306	2,542	2,653	2,815	29,332
1891*	1,712	1,546	1,643	1,790	1,931	1,557	2,102	1,886	1,990	2,439	2,309	2,408	23,313
1890*	1,747	1,628	1,836	1,781	1,448	1,756	2,429	1,972	1,486	2,092	1,681	2,556	22,412
1889*	1,264	1,459	1,325	1,501	1,404	1,060	1,499	1,452	1,523	1,915	1,554	1,642	17,598
1888*	1,601	1,210	1,239	1,437	1,155	1,109	1,539	1,403	1,314	1,278	1,263	1,471	16,019
1887*	1,521	1,045	1,365	1,431	1,284	1,039	1,481	1,332	1,276	1,466	1,742	1,414	16,396
1886*	1,395	1,227	1,335	1,088	1,053	944	1,423	1,146	1,135	1,448	1,423	1,695	15,222
1885*	1,375	1,311	1,446	1,194	1,074	916	1,281	1,047	1,119	1,058	1,060	1,233	14,114
1884	1,522	1,052	1,222	1,294	1,111	959	1,205	1,110	1,313	1,381	1,294	1,417	14,880
1883	1,231	889	1,221	956	1,131	847	1,197	1,226	1,367	1,159	1,423	1,319	13,866
1876	6,167	6,194	6,933	7,140	6,381	5,242	6,161	6,685	5,842	7,004	6,862	6,804	77,406
1882													
Totals	45,312	40,928	44,204	44,532	40,773	38,306	49,261	45,460	44,263	47,662	46,601	50,244	537,526

\* For the United States only.