

## BRITISH AMERICA ASSURANCE COMPANY

A year of brilliant achievement is reported in its 1917 statement by the British America Assurance Company, which, established in 1833, takes rank as the oldest surviving Canadian insurance organization. Both in the extent of the business transacted, and the results secured, last year's operations are far ahead of any preceding period. Such a statement is peculiarly gratifying in the case of a company like the British America, which, from time to time, has been put to the severest possible tests, but has consistently maintained a high standard, both in the practical conduct of its business, and in its relations with policyholders, and has in consequence an enviable hold upon public esteem and confidence.

### The Experience of 1917.

In the British America's accounts, fire and hail business are linked together. The net premiums in these two departments totalled, for 1917, \$2,442,577, an increase approaching \$400,000 upon those of 1916. Accompanying this substantial enlargement of premium income was a loss experience much more favorable than in the preceding year. Losses at \$1,236,646 were actually lower than in 1916, and in the fine proportion to premiums of only 50.1 per cent. Both fire and hail insurance are, of course, essentially operations with marked ups and downs, and even a period producing so satisfactory results as last year, had its drawbacks, in abnormally heavy fires on this continent, with shortage of labour and industrial plants running at high pressure also adding their quota to the fire waste. However, after payment of expenses and taxes, there is a credit balance on this account of \$266,957.

Still more handsome results were secured in the Marine Branch, which, revived a few years ago, transacted last year an enormously enlarged business. Net premiums totalled \$1,390,785 compared with \$431,719 in 1916, losses absorbing \$748,934. After payment of expenses and taxes, there was a credit balance from the Marine Branch of \$379,221. It is to be remembered, of course, that owing to changing conditions, the decrease in vessel tonnage and the decline in the volume of cargo risks due to the fact that the Government now takes 90 per cent. of the space on vessels sailing from this side of the Atlantic and Government cargoes are uninsured, that the extent of marine business has probably passed its high point and will shortly show a decline from the figures reached last year.

### Largely Increased Assets.

The credit balance on the year's operations, including interests and rents, is \$726,791. This is easily the highest figure yet reported in the Company's long history, the previous high record, made in 1915, being \$270,412. Out of this amount, dividends of \$96,250 have been paid; \$30,000 reserved for possible taxes; \$44,932, the year's profit on the hail business carried to a special reserve. The more quickly to comply with the new Dominion requirements, whereby one-half of each year's profit on the hail business shall be set aside as a Hail Surplus Fund, until one-half of the year's net premiums is thus reserved. There have also

been sundry writings off, including \$49,644 in market value of securities and \$16,086 off real estate holdings (home office). Assets at December 31st last totalled \$3,522,020, an increase of over \$750,000 upon the 1916 showing, security holdings being taken in at market values at the year-end and not at the somewhat higher values allowed by the Dominion insurance department. Surplus to policyholders on the Government standard is \$1,039,195, an increase for the year of approximately \$300,000.

All concerned with the British America, whether in Canada or abroad, are to be congratulated upon the splendid showing made, which must be especially gratifying to Mr. W. B. Meikle, the president and general manager, and his lieutenants, Messrs. John Sime, assistant general manager, and E. F. Garrow, secretary.

## ANOTHER BRITISH INSURANCE MERGER.

It is announced that a provisional agreement has been entered into between the Friends' Provident Institution and the directors of the Century Insurance Company, of Edinburgh, whereby the shareholders of the latter company are to receive an offer for their shares of £6 5s. each, together with 2s. final dividend for the year 1917, from the company. The arrangement comes to be of a unique character among insurance fusions, states the Review, this being the first instance in which a mutual life office has allied itself as senior partner with a composite office. The Institution transacts life business alone, while the Century operates practically all other forms of insurance, in addition to a prosperous and progressive life department. Each concern will continue operations on its own distinctive lines, while acting in the closest possible co-operation for mutual benefit.

The Century dates from 1885, while the Friends' Provident Institution was founded in 1832 by members of the Society of Friends, for the purpose of mutual life insurance for "Quakers" and their connections.

The Century has been transacting fire insurance in Canada for several years, under provincial licenses and has lately obtained a Dominion license. Total assets of the Company at the end of 1916 were approximately \$7,700,000, and it is understood that a substantial addition to this sum was made during 1917.

### A MODEST CLAIM.

L. Babayan, a Toronto dealer in Oriental antiques, sued five insurance companies for \$47,500, loss sustained in a fire at his premises, 77 Bay street, Toronto, on March 27th, 1916. After a trial lasting fourteen days, Babayan was awarded \$5,350. The judge pointed out that there was a great difference between the cost prices of Oriental rugs, and the prices usually quoted to, and frequently obtained from the customer.

Mr. Frank Lock, United States manager of the Atlas, declares that in no single year do the stock fire insurance companies in the United States combined make as much yearly profit as Henry Ford makes for himself out of his own personal holdings in his motor company.