BRITISH FIRE COMPANIES IN THE UNITED STATES.

A new record was made by the United States branches of the British insurance companies, last year, fresh high-water marks having been established in fire premium receipts, in aggregate assets held for the protection and benefit of American policyholders, and in net surplus, the item showing the smallest increase being the losses incurred. It was a comparatively prosperous year, therefore, for the English companies which will not fail to be appreciated by the home offices, more especially at the present time owing to the disturbed conditions of business of all kinds abroad and necessarily including fire insurance.

The premium receipts of the twenty-one British companies transacting business here throughout the past year amounted to $57,537,946, as shown by the statements filed with the New York Insurance Department by the managers of the United States branches. This was a gain of over four million dollars ($4,051,613), as compared with the previous year, while the increase in losses was only a trifle over one million dollars ($1,057,549). In other words, the increase in premiums was equal to 11.31 per cent., while the ratio of losses to premiums, last year, was 53.33 per cent., against 55.40 per cent. in 1914—a decrease of over 2 per cent. The aggregate assets of the twenty-one companies at the close of last year was very close to a hundred million dollars ($99,362,031), a gain for the twelve months of $6,667,559, with an increase in net surplus of $4,653,498.

PERSISTENT WATCHFUL EFFORTS.

These are important results, gained without any flourish of trumpets by the United States managers, but by persistent, watchful efforts devoted to every branch of the business. Of course, a few of the leading companies transacted the bulk of last year's business, but it is interesting to note that the ratio of losses to premiums of the United States branches transacting a more limited business show only small increases over their more stalwart competitors. Ten companies received 80.64 per cent. of the total premiums, and their ratio of losses to premiums was 53.12 per cent., while the premiums of the remaining eleven companies amounted to only $11,142,961 with losses of 54.18 per cent. of premiums.

With a hundred million assets securely invested and held here for the protection of American policyholders; with over thirty-seven millions surplus in excess of all liabilities, and with an annual premium income approaching sixty millions, the United States branches of the British companies and their multitude of policyholders in this country are to be heartily congratulated.—*Insurance Index.*