

eight miles brings the main artery of north and south trade within easy reach of the ancient and thriving port of the Mediterranean, Marseilles.

French railways appear to serve the country consistently and well. The fact that much of the mileage in the country is administered by the state puts into the hands of the general public a greater degree of control over rail transportation than if the lines were privately administered. The company controlled lines provide a service which seems both cheap and rapid, and on account of the smallness of the carriages, the shipper, whose consignments are not large, has an advantage not common in America.

Following the war of 1870, Germany had an advantage over France due to the indemnity which the latter was compelled to pay. This indemnity was paid ahead of time out of the people's savings to the surprise of Germany and to the admiration of the world. Germany's main advantage, however, consisted not in the indemnity, but in the right as imposed by the treaty of Frankfurt to secure the minimum tariff for all her products in all circumstances when imported into France.

This concession undoubtedly has worked great harm to French industry, as its development has been checked in many directions by Germany's system of government subsidies and "Kartells." French manufacturers have undoubtedly had to submit to great commercial pressure brought about by the systematic and undermining competition of Germany, and in many cases they have experienced great difficulty in maintaining the prosperity of their establishments. Consequent upon this condition in French industry, the balance of trade with Germany has been growing steadily more and more adverse to France. Canadian exporters who are considering business with France will find that many of the products imported from Germany are such as could be supplied

from Canada—and if not from Canada, then from other portions of the Empire.

France may have been ready for the war, but she was not prepared for anything like the struggle necessitated by the high development of German preparations. France was caught exactly as England was caught, with some of her key industries at a low level of preparedness; but the coming of hostilities gave a tremendous stimulus to some of these. The difficulties by which the country was confronted were immensely increased by the fact that the greater part of her industrial territory was overrun. The steel-producing plants of the north-east, which ranked among the best in the world, fell into German hands; therefore the other centres of metal production were forced into unusual activity. Many other industries had practically to be developed from the ground up, and the best brains of the country were put into the making of changes, rapidly and efficiently. The marvellous power of rapid improvisation was witnessed by the commission, when it had the privilege of seeing a certain munitions factory, where a complete plant capable of producing 50,000 shells per day was installed and working to full capacity within five months.

The national response among all classes has been quite beyond anticipation, and the world owes much to France for her hardihood and her adaptability under circumstances which were most difficult.

Through the aid of the Ministry of Commerce and the good offices of the commissioner-general for Canada in Paris, the commission was enabled to send out blanks to be filled out by French firms who wished to import from, or export to, Canada. The large number of replies received indicates the strong desire for closer trade relations which exists in France. The department of trade and commerce can give full information regarding these to any who apply.

PORT OF PROGRESS

St. John, New Brunswick, Makes Wonderful Strides as Shipping Port

"Blood will tell. So will geography," remarked Mr. R. E. Armstrong, secretary of the St. John, N.B., board of trade, to *The Monetary Times* recently. "It is the existence of the geographical fact that St. John has the shortest rail haul from the west of any other winter port in Canada that has led to its wonderful strides as a shipping port. For the first three months of the present fiscal year the total of exports and imports passing through the city amounted to \$103,514,476, a greater sum than at any other port in Canada.

"During the last fiscal year its total trade, as shown by the government blue books, amounted to \$206,087,220, which was over 50 millions greater than the combined export and import values at the ports of Halifax, Sydney, Quebec, Vancouver, Victoria and Prince Rupert. The previous year showed an increase of over \$26,000,000 over the ports named above.

Winter Freight Terminus.

"The Canadian Pacific Railway Company, recognizing the strategic situation of St. John, has chosen it as its winter freight terminus and has entered upon a campaign of terminal development which must greatly increase the potentialities of the port. This company now has yardage accommodation for about 1,800 cars and elevator space for a million and a half bushels of grain. In addition to what the Canadian Pacific Railway is doing at St. John, the Canadian Government Railways is constructing a grain elevator with a present capacity of 500,000 bushels. The Fegles-Bellows Company have the contract for the construction of this elevator and hope to have it completed by the 1st of December.

"The federal government has asked for tenders for the extension to Partridge Island of the breakwater at the western entrance of the harbor, the objects of this extension being to protect the inner harbor from southerly and south-westerly swells and at the same time to give more room for pier development. It is expected that work will shortly be begun on pier 17 and that the Courtenay Bay (East St. John) development, which was suspended some months ago because of the slow progress that the contractors were making, will be resumed.

"There is no boom on at St. John, but its growth is steady and healthy. Business has been unusually good. Industrially, the city has made much progress. One of the most encouraging industrial features has been the revival of the wooden shipbuilding. Forty years ago, St. John stood fourth in the list of wooden ship-owning ports. Until this year there has been no wooden ship construction here since 1884. Now, the firm of Grant and Horne are building a 3,000-ton wooden steamer for the Imperial government; D. A. Saker and Company have started on the construction of a vessel of one thousand tons carrying capacity, and the St. John Shipbuilding Company, with a million dollar capital, is preparing to enter upon the construction of wooden and steel ships. Other shipyards are springing up in the neighborhood.

The business of the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada for the first nine months of this year showed an increase of more than \$7,000,000 over the same period of last year. The Montreal agency of the company reports business under which the full year's premium was paid to the company in cash, from January 1st to September 30th, amounted to \$2,025,465, against \$2,588,754 last year, an increase of \$336,710.