

these necessary measures given first attention, a convention of business men would no doubt materially assist trade development, but we suggest that it should be representative of every industry and it can only be so by including farmers amongst its members.

### BRITAIN'S TRANSPORTATION REVENUE

According to Lloyd's registry at the outbreak of the war the world's steam and sail tonnage was 49,089,552 composed of 30,836 vessels of 100 tons and upwards. Of this the United Kingdom had 11,328 ships of 21,045,049 tons. The Allied total was 15,701 ships of 26,554,647 tons, the Central Powers 3,035 ships of 6,648,173 tons and all neutral 10,997 ships of 15,178,346 tons. The losses up to March 23, 1916, by Great Britain were 379 steamers, 31 sailing vessels and 237 trawlers, and the tonnage of the two former 1,339,000. But in 1915, after more than a year of war, the steam shipping of Great Britain increased 88 vessels and 344,000 tons. This means that the proportion of total world's tonnage owned by Great Britain is greater than ever before.

It has been estimated that 3,100 merchant vessels are at present demanded to answer the requirements of the military and naval forces, and tho by far the largest percentage of these are British they will not all belong to Great Britain. Assuming that the tonnage of these boats is the average tonnage of the boats in the calculation of the first paragraph we have left 9,000 ships with an approximate tonnage of 16,000,000 to be devoted to the pursuit of regular trading business. In 1914 the total foreign tonnage entered at United States ports was 39,658,500 and of this 25,458,000 was British. The shipping belonging to the United States in 1914 (steam and sailing vessels) was 6,860,000 tons of which approxi-

mately only 1,000,000 was engaged in foreign trade. In 1861 the total tonnage of U.S.A. was 5,540,000 or only about 350,000 tons short of the whole British Empire at that time and about one-third the total world's tonnage. The proportion of American trade carried in American vessels was then over 75 per cent. of the total. Now it is virtually nil. Great Britain has built her great merchant fleet under the necessity of importing from foreign countries steel, brass, zinc, wood, ropes, hemp, etc., but under free trade, while the United States shipbuilding interests have languished and died under a highly protective tariff that enhanced the prices of many shipbuilding necessities far beyond what they could be purchased for outside and benefitted only a few privileged interests.

One of the greatest factors outside of actual exports in keeping the foreign trade of a country in equilibrium is the amount it can earn on the transportation of exported goods, i.e., freight and insurance. This goes to make up the balance of its debits and its credits and with exports and interest on capital invested abroad is the main means of balancing these debits and credits. Great Britain being the world's greatest carrying nation has enormous claims against other countries. In 1902 Great Britain's total tonnage was 15,546,897 and her annual claims against foreign countries then was estimated at over \$440,000,000. At the same time U.S.A. was paying \$200,000,000 annually to foreign nations for this carriage cost.

In 1902 ocean freight rates were very low, in fact the rate from Montreal to Liverpool that year was only 3.8 cents per 60 pounds of grain. Only three times has it been lower since 1861 and then only a fraction of a cent. The average rate during 1915 on the same commodity as that mentioned above has been very many times, probably on an average at

least ten times higher than in 1902, and 1916 rates are soaring much beyond that. With an ocean tonnage greater today than in 1902 when she earned \$440,000,000 in the carrying trade and freight rates now multiplied many times, the toll that British capital thru transportation charges is levying on the world's shipping is stupendous. The total increase in revenue of British shipping last year over the previous year was in excess of \$500,000,000, more than half of which was paid by American importers and exporters. Sir George Paish, the world's leading financial authority, claims that the United States is paying toll to Great Britain for shipping facilities at the rate of fully \$600,000,000 per year. Great Britain receives, it is stated, more for carrying merchandise than would pay the interest and provide a sinking fund to retire her total war debt as it stands today. While fortunes are being made in some countries on war munitions, British capital thru her shipping industry, built up in times of peace, is forcing neutral nations to contribute heavily to Britain's war expenses.

The annual report of the United Farmers of Alberta just published is something new and out of the ordinary in the way of annual reports of farmers' organizations. It is attractively gotten up and the secretary has displayed considerable enterprise in selling advertising space in it to defray part of the cost of its publication. The information contained in it in addition to the regular report of the convention will make it a valuable work of reference to the members. Every member of the U.F.A. should have a copy.

"The Farmer and the Interests" is a book that will show you clearly the strangling grip the interests have on the farmers. It is very easy reading.



UP IN THE CLOUDS

Sir George Foster proposes to create a special trade commission to be sent to England and other countries to find new trade openings for Canadian products when right here at home countless opportunities can be had by merely taking down the tariff wall and throwing open the market to the south for unrestricted trade.