

Port and Shipping News

U. S.-GERMAN MERGER?

Interest has been aroused in maritime circles by a cable despatch from Paris quoting a French newspaper, which said that arrangements had been completed by which the Hamburg-American Line was to be consolidated with a large New York steamship corporation. The information was received in Paris from Berlin, and added that the American concern was ready to turn over a certain amount of tonnage to the Hamburg Line for use on its former trade routes.

ECHO OF SEA TRAGEDY.

The Standard Oil Company, owners of the American steamer O. B. Jennings, was relieved last week by an Admiralty court of responsibility for £1,000,000 damages asked by owners of the British tank steamer War Knight, lost off the British coast on March 24, 1918. Thirty-seven men were drowned or burned to death. The owners of the War Knight charged negligence on the part of the O. B. Jennings.

The War Knight and the O. B. Jennings, both laden with oil, collided at night when within fifteen miles of their destination. Gas generated by oil in the O. B. Jennings was said to have been ignited when the two vessels met, and the flames enveloped the War Knight. The War Knight, drifting in a pool of flaming oil, struck a mine and was blown up.

INCREASED CUSTOMS RECEIPTS.

Inland revenue and Customs returns for the port of Montreal for the month of July show substantial advances both in comparison with the previous month and also with the corresponding month last year. In each case the figures denote much greater business activity and a great volume of commerce in luxury goods.

The total receipts of the Inland Revenue Department for the month just closed were \$2,664,610, the amount being approximately, as there were still some accounts not dealt with. The amount for the same month last year was \$1,966,715 giving an increase of \$697,895 for this year. The total for July also shows an increase of \$287,740 over June of this year.

One important factor working against the swelling of the Inland Revenue is, of course, the great reduction in the use of spirits. Where the amount of \$100,000 has been collected during the past month, in the former days there would have been from \$600,000 to \$700,000 collected. On the other hand, it was pointed out by Mr. J. A. Bernier, district inspector, that there has been a great boom in the use of tobacco, cigars and cigarettes. The latter particularly, are largely responsible for the increase of revenue, and it was suggested that this fact was attributable to the large numbers of returning soldiers, with whom the cigarette is undoubtedly the popular smoke. As regards the amount collected on spirits, it does not necessarily mean that spirituous liquors were consumed to that extent, as a considerable proportion of spirits is used by manufacturers and for general pharmaceutical purposes. Also there is good reason to believe that Montreal is the shipping centre for spirituous liquors to "dry" Ontario.

Customs receipts for the port of Montreal for the month of July also show a very satisfactory increase of \$210,467, as compared with the same month in 1918. The figures were \$3,588,621, as against \$3,378,154 for July last year. The increase over the previous month of June was \$222,777; in fact, with one exception—that of May last—the total for July was the largest for two years.

IMPORTANCE OF SHIPBUILDING.

In a presidential address given to the Canadian Manufacturers' Association recently by Mr. W. J. Bulman, of Bulman Bros., Limited, Winnipeg, some very interesting items were given on the vast importance of shipbuilding. In part Mr. Bulman says that if the work of the Canadian Trade Mission in London is to bear fruit, it must not be negated by the shortage in ocean transportation. It is of the utmost importance that the shipbuilding programme of the Government should be hurried to completion, and that efforts be made to secure more ocean space. It will be most serious if the latter part of the summer and fall finds Canadian farmers unable to ship their wheat to Europe, and Canadian manufacturers unable to ship their goods, which have already been sold, on account of the lack of shipping facilities.

LOWER RATES TO CONTINUE.

Continuance of reduced freight charges on several shipping rates will encourage export trade from Britain, according to advices from London. Shipping companies have decided to keep in force indefinitely the lower rates that were fixed for the first half of 1919. The rates appear to have more permanence than was the case earlier in the year. Hitherto the lower rates applied to cargo as it went forward to each individual steamer. This has since been modified by companies in the Indian trade to apply to shippers who are ready to enter upon a contract on the current basis for a period of three months.

Many vessels have left British ports in ballast or partly filled on account of the lack of sufficient cargo at the higher rates. This has been accepted as a possible solution for the action of the shipping companies. It was not infrequently the case that vessels on their outward voyage from Great Britain did not carry enough cargo to meet expenses incident to the voyage. The lower rates are found to be attracting larger quantities of merchandise, making for more desirable conditions in the carrying trade.

\$80,000,000 SHIP DEAL.

One hundred steamships built on the Great Lakes during the war have been sold by the U.S. Shipping Board to the Anderson Overseas Corporation, of New York, for approximately \$80,000,000. This is probably the largest ship sale on record, the Board said in announcing the deal tonight, and the vessels will eventually pass into French and Italian ownership.

Delivery of the ships will commence August 10 and proceed at the rate of six or more a week until completed, Chairman Hurley said. As the sale is made on a partial payment basis, the board will keep a measure of control to assure provision of insurance, protection and freedom from liens. The ships range from 3,300 to 3,600 deadweight tons draft.

HAPPINESS ENGINEERS.

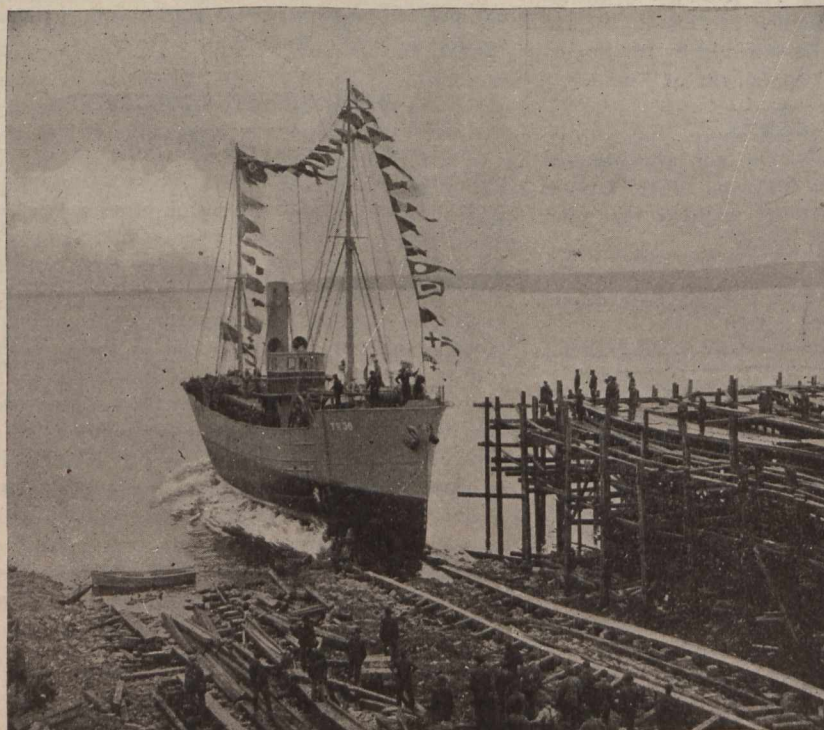
Happiness engineers are quite as important as efficiency engineers. Accordingly group insurance of all employees under one policy has developed at an amazing rate, and while this form of insurance is only one item in a welfare program it nevertheless is a substantial item, and it is worthy of most serious consideration as one important phase in handling the ever increasingly delicate problem of labor versus capital.

FISH PRICES IN PARIS.

If the New Brunswick fishermen who have been making good catches of salmon could sell their catches at Paris prices the cost of living would not worry them for a while. In the French capital salmon have been selling at anywhere from 15 to 26 francs per kilogramme, which is from \$1.40 to \$2.35 per pound. Prices of all kinds of fish have been very high in France.

While New Brunswick fishermen are selling sardine herring to the packers for \$10 per hoghead, the French fishermen have signed an agreement to deliver sardines to the packers at prices ranging from \$26 to \$32 per quintal of 220 pounds. Catching sardines in France is, however, a much more expensive process than in New Brunswick, and this year the French fishermen are paying over \$20 per barrel for fish roes used to toll the sardines into their nets.

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