

Cargo Outturns.—Early in 1917 the Board of Grain Commissioners submitted to the various interests, enquiries as to the continuance of the regulations in force since 1915, and in due course at a meeting of the grain section it was resolved to ask for the re-enactment of the same regulations for the ensuing season. Some eastern elevators were opposed to this, and the loading houses sought a larger contribution from the carrier. The Commission therefore called a conference at Montreal on April 12, and all parties were represented there. After full argument and after a proposal from the representatives of this association, to meet an important objection, by allowing the ship to contribute a straight 15 lb. per 1,000 bush. on wheat, barley and oats, instead of $\frac{1}{4}$ bush. per 1,000 bush. as heretofore, the Commission recorded an agreement to the re-enactment of the regulations for another season, with the one amendment above mentioned. The regulations were later promulgated accordingly, but under protest from the loading houses as to their contribution: a protest which has now been renewed in writing as to 1918. At this conference the special committee appointed by the grain commission to devise some permanent arrangement, made recommendations in favor of some plan that would include the shipper of the grain in the contributions towards adjustment. The commission was asked to assist in procuring the necessary amendment of the statute to permit this and also to work out some equitable scheme that could be enforced. The commission reserved any decision.

Buffalo Grain Clearance Corporation.—On April 11, 1917, the day preceding the conference with the grain commission at Montreal, a conference of representatives of this association, The Lake Carriers' Association and the Grain Clearance Corporation, was held at Buffalo. It was then resolved at the outset that the Clearance Corporation ought to continue its services if arrangements could be made, and after full discussion of reports a working plan was outlined in the following terms:—

1. That the contribution of the ships shall be on the basis of $\frac{1}{2}$ bush. per 1,000 bush. from all ports to all ports;
2. That in order to provide funds for operating and for the purposes mentioned in clause 4, the ships shall respectively pay \$200 on first arrival with grain cargo, subject to this contract (majority opinion seems to be that this item should be a fixed amount, but may be on sliding scale, based on capacity of ships or other conditions);
3. The 12c. and 24c. of the former contract may be increased to 15c. and 30c.;
4. Such contribution on first arrival shall be evidenced by receipt showing terms on which contribution is made, substantially that such contributions are to be repaid as soon as practicable after close of navigation, subject to the deduction of such amount from each contribution as may be necessary to give the corporation a sum, including its surplus earnings, sufficient to repay the voluntary contributions already received this year from carriers; to pay the deficit of 1916, excluding capital; and to pay back to the corporation one quarter of its exhausted capital;
5. That this agreement is for one year only and that any surplus earnings over refunds and total deficits shall be credited pro rata to the subscribers of 1917, and new arrangement to be made for 1918.

This proposal was approved by members of this association present at the Montreal conference on the following day and was at once submitted to all members by circular. On April 16th parties met again at Buffalo and settled a form of contract, similar to that previously in use, but containing the amendments above set out. This contract was then printed and upon being sent by the corporation to individual vessel owners for signature was generally adopted and entered into. In the meantime the representatives of the loading houses, who had protested at one-sixth of a bushel, after some consideration agreed to pay on shipments to the

U. S. the same amount as on Canadian shipments, but they continued their protest, and on April 21 met the grain commission at Winnipeg to present their argument for certain lower contributions. The commission, however, quite properly held to the opinion that the arrangement was concluded at Montreal, and in due course the loading houses through C. B. Piper gave the required assent to continue their contributions on the basis of one-sixth of a bushel, and the commission's regulations were then issued as above reported. Nevertheless, the final agreement of the loading houses was made under protest, and notice was served upon this association that readjustment must be made before another season opened. This noticed has just been repeated, as appears from a letter received from the secretary of the grain commission after this report was prepared. The commission invites an expression of this association's views. Unfortunately the reorganized business of the Grain Clearance Corporation again proved unsuccessful, and it was forced to discontinue operations June 30, 1917.

Shortage in Outturns, generally.—A fair indication of the outturns of cargoes loaded at Fort William and Port Arthur in the autumn of 1917 is given by the returns sent out periodically by the Board of Grain Commissioners. An appendix to this report is made up from these returns covering periods from Aug. 22 to Dec. 18, 1917. It will be noted that the damaged grain shown in this statement forms part of the reported shortages and that the net shortage during the period mentioned, and excluding damaged grain, amounted to 0.42 bush. per 1,000 bush. of the bill of lading quantities. The detailed returns show that in number the shortages greatly exceeded the overages, only 102 cargoes turning out in excess of the bill of lading quantity, while 432 ran short.

Grain Bill of Lading adopted by Lake Carriers' Association.—A proposal for such a bill of lading as this was discussed at the conference in Buffalo, called to consider the winding up of the Grain Clearance Corporation, but in view of the existing regulations in force in Canada it was not considered possible to bring such a bill of lading into general use. At a later meeting of the Lake Carriers' Association a form was tentatively adopted and submitted to the Dominion Marine Association for approval. It was considered at a meeting of the association's grain section in Toronto on Sept. 11, but for the reason above mention and because the Wheat Export Co. was not at once prepared to consider the proposal, no action was taken. The new lake carriers' bill of lading was shortly afterwards formally adopted and put in print. A form intended for use on shipments from Canadian ports appears in an appendix to this report. This association is advised that the clause as to general average is allowed by the decision of the U. S. Supreme Court in the Jason case, notwithstanding the provisions of the Harter Act: and your Counsel has expressed the opinion that in view of the wording of the Canadian Water Carriage of Goods Act, a similar decision would probably be reached by Canadian courts. The Lake Shippers Clearance Association, by letter from Fort William dated Dec. 31, 1917, advised that this form had not then been used on any of its shipments.

Control of Grain Trade as a War Measure.—During the year general supervision has been exercised as to certain designated particulars, by a Board of Grain

Supervisors appointed by order in council; and latterly a corporation known as The Wheat Export Co., Ltd., has been directly charged by the Dominion Government with the export business, and, represented by Jas. Stewart, this corporation has now been in control and in relations with members of this association throughout the autumn trade. On Sept. 11 a joint meeting of this association's executive committee and its grain section met Mr. Stewart at Toronto to consider his proposals to simplify shipment and avoid congestion and delay, and also his further request for the fixing of a maximum freight rate. Members present all expressed the wish to facilitate his work as much as possible, and volunteered to accept the same maximum rate as that agreed upon on the previous day with the Lake Carriers' Association for the Buffalo trade, namely, $4\frac{1}{4}$ c. No decision was reached and although correspondence ensued, this association was not asked to take action as a body on a matter regarding which no agreement binding members could be made, and the question was left to individual members to be dealt with at discretion.

Payment of Freight Charges by Railway Companies.—Upon notification from the railway companies' freight agents that vessels would no longer receive settlement of freight at Georgian Bay elevators, the matter was considered at a meeting of the association's grain section in Toronto in April and it was resolved to notify the Winnipeg Grain Exchange that shippers must prepay the freight or make some other satisfactory arrangement. Notice was given accordingly by wire and by letter. Correspondence ensued and in due course the required arrangements were made to protect the interests of the carrier.

Clearances at Fort William and Port Arthur.—In October a suggestion was received for simplification of the requirements regarding clearances at these ports, and the association asked the Minister of Customs to endeavor to find means to enable a ship to make a single clearance for each voyage, instead of a clearance each time she was moved from one port to the other, and also to enable clearance to be obtained at all hours and even during process of loading. The Minister favored the proposal, particularly with reference to the possible improvement in dispatch, and agreed to send a special officer to the ports to investigate and report. The matter is still under consideration and the question should be revived with the new ministry.

Coasting Laws.—On June 26, in view of the war conditions, and after an understanding that reciprocal action would result in the U. S., the Canadian Government proclaimed a suspension of the restrictions relating to the coasting for foreign vessels, on condition that similar privileges were in effect granted to Canadian vessels by the U. S. Government. This proposal was communicated officially to this association, shortly in advance of the passage of the order, but no opposition was offered to it, as previous protests against violation or suspension of the coasting laws had suggested reciprocal abrogation as an unobjectionable measure. Upon the passage of the order in council the various U. S. port authorities were at once instructed from Washington to suspend the enforcement of the law in their country and permit coasting of Canadian ships without imposing penalties, pending the preparation and adoption of the necessary amendment to act of Congress. It was not until Oct. 5, 1917, that the U. S. Senate finally adopted