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## Shipbuilding Industry in British Columbia

**New Orders Being Placed for Wooden Ships—Further Wooden and Steel Ship Contracts in Prospect—Importance of Industry to Province and Necessity to Keep It Active.**

The renewal of shipbuilding orders recently placed in the Province has again drawn attention to this important industry. Shipbuilding is now the most important industrial activity in British Columbia and its well-being and continued

activity is of vital interest to the business of the Province. As a direct outgrowth of war and born of war conditions, it is problematical just how long the industry will continue to flourish; but that it is of supreme moment to keep it active for as long a period in the future as possible is the public duty of business men.

Since the Imperial Munitions Board decided to place no further orders for wooden vessels of steam propulsion in British Columbia yards there has been considerable concern over the employment of these yards in filling the Allied need for bottoms. Since that time negotiations have been in progress for the building of wooden ships especially, for which our Coast yards offer special advantages.

The French Government has taken a hand in the matter and is very keenly disposed toward increasing its merchant shipping, and is especially desirous of acquiring wooden sailing vessels with auxiliary power similar in class to those which were turned out under the British Columbia Shipbuilding Act. While vessels of this

character are now not permitted to enter the war zone on account of their slow speed, the French Government is very anxious to maintain trade among her colonies, and between her colonies and Allied and neutral countries. In view of her present economic position she cannot see her way clear to pay for the building of these ships in the United States or Canada except in so far as the United States Government pays for their building and gives the French Government credit therefor. The limit of French orders in Canada is determined by the amount of money which the United States will release for this purpose, as the French Government is willing to place orders for any number of vessels, within reason that she can obtain the credit to pay for.

In the forefront of these negotiations the Foundation Company of New York, with shipyards at Tacoma, Portland and Victoria, has succeeded for its Victoria yards in obtaining contracts for the building of twenty wooden vessels, with twenty more in prospect. These are all that is definitely known have been placed by French interests in British Columbia, although it is understood that negotiations are in progress for the building of a large number of vessels of similar design. Norway is just as keen after bottoms as she was in 1916 and 1917; but due to the fact that British, Canadian and American Governments will not permit steel ships being erected in the yards of these countries to sail under a neutral flag, Norway has extreme difficulty in increasing her steel ship tonnage. Gradually Norwegian interests have turned to the wooden and concrete ships and have recently placed in British Columbia yards small orders for wooden ship construction. The Cholberg Shipbuilding Company of Victoria has, it is stated, nine contracts; and the Western Canada Shipbuilding Company, it is also reported, has six contracts; with the New Westminster and Coquitlam yards in negotiations for ships or have recently been awarded contracts for them. The Lyall Shipbuilding Company of North Vancouver is building seven ships for its own account and to be under independent Canadian register.

The steel shipbuilding industry is in negotiation for additional steel ships to be erected in British Columbia yards. The Dominion Government programme of steel shipbuilding outlines a quite heavy programme of building ships of a standard design of 8,100 tons to be placed in the available steel yards of both the Atlantic and Pacific. Under present arrangements it is expected that J. Coughlan & Sons will have completed its programme of building ten 8,800-ton steel ships by next spring, and it is proposed to require this company to change its plans from an 8,800-ton ship to an 8,100-ton ship, which will involve considerable expense and delay in making the necessary changes. This firm is in negotiation with the Dominion Government to permit it to continue to build the 8,800-ton ship in place of the 8,100-ton ship standard design, and it is the opinion in the best ship-

### SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

WAR EFFORT OF CANADIAN LIFE COMPANIES AND MEN

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