

tonnage passing through the Canadian canal, like that using the American canal, consists almost wholly of low-grade bulky freight, the greater part being east-bound. In 1907, 12.5 millions of tons of freight passed down through the Canadian canal, an increase of 76 per cent. over 1906. The canal is not, however, successful in carrying a large portion of this down by the St. Lawrence route. Of the 1907 grain shipments from Port Arthur and Fort William 24 per cent. went by water to Canadian points east of the Welland Canal; while 43 per cent. went to Georgian Bay and Lake Huron points, whence it was handled by rail. It must be remembered that, while the "Soo" Canal permits the passage of the large Lake-going vessels, conditions are different in the case of the Welland and the St. Lawrence canals. In general, a vessel 247 feet in length, 42 feet 6 inches wide, drawing 13 feet and carrying 2,212 tons of cargo may be regarded as typical of the ordinary vessel accommodation afforded by these canals.

Early in 1907 a deputation of vessel-owners and grain-shippers memorialized the Dominion Government to so deepen and improve the Welland Canal as to accommodate the largest vessels of the Upper Lakes. The Government has at present under consideration a project for deepening the canal to twenty-five feet. The various commercial organizations are, however, by no means agreed on this question. At present it takes a vessel from sixteen to nineteen hours to lock through the canal, according to the conditions of traffic. The same expenditure of time would permit the vessel to get back to the Detroit River. In the case of the larger vessels it would be more economical to pick up a coal cargo on Lake Erie and go west to the river than to continue east, attempting to pick up a cargo west-bound from the light traffic offering from Lake Ontario or the St. Lawrence River. It is true that if the canal were improved the time disadvantage would be lessened, but it would not be eliminated. As regards the deepening of the St. Lawrence canals, it may be noted that the transportation of grain in barges from Prescott to Montreal has certain advantages. The exporter can bring his barges alongside the ocean-going vessel at Montreal, thus saving elevator charges which have been complained of as exorbitant. If the ocean vessel is not ready to load, the demurrage charges on the barges are low.

It is under such conditions of dissatisfaction with the Lower