

quiries have gone, we could not get a contract for steel ships very much less than from \$125 to \$135 a ton and nowhere in Canada could we get the steel for the building and no place in the United States, under eight or ten or more months for delivery. This brings it about that the delivery of ships built under these conditions could not be guaranteed, if orders were given at once and construction gone on with as rapidly as possible, until the middle of 1917 or later. What conditions would be met with in the ocean carrying world at that time nobody knows. If peace were to ensue the interned tonnage turned loose and the necessities of army convoys and munition and supply carrying were done away with, the builder of these ships, be it Government or individual, would find himself with the most costly construction thrown into competition with the released tonnage of the world, and a corporation, and still less a Government, does not wish to face that contingency.

These are some few of the considerations hurriedly thrown together which have to be taken into account in framing a policy for shipbuilding. Coincident with that is one of the most pressing of all conditions, the exceedingly large contributions that must be taken from the country in capital and taxes to sustain the burdens of the war, which are now costing us nearly \$20,000,000 per month. There is a limit to the provision of funds by the methods of taxation; there is also a limit to the borrowing possibilities even of Canada, shut out as it now is practically from every European market.

Please do not consider that, although sending this, I do not sympathise, and very strongly sympathise, with the considerations you have put forth. It is a difficult matter for a Government, as you will quite see, and the best I can say is that they are now giving and will continue to give it their very best consideration.

The Quebec Board of Trade's Answer.

Sir George Foster's letter having been considered by the Quebec Board of Trade, Mr. Scott wrote Sir George Foster on June 19, to London, England, as follows: We still think that it would be wise for the Government to take the initiative and build six or more commercial steamships of 8,000 to 10,000 tons each, say, two at Montreal, two at Quebec, and two in the Maritime Provinces, on the basis of the cost of labor and material plus a reasonable percentage for the builder. By doing this, they would introduce an element of competition and at same time establish a basis of cost to guide them in the legislation necessary to establish this most important industry.

We respectfully suggest that it is the government which should incur the risk of building at the present moment, when, as you say, there is uncertainty as to the conditions which will prevail after the war is over. Private capital, as you know, is proverbially timid, and will not take risks until things have settled down. In the meantime, the country is crying out for relief in the way of shipping. Three-fourths of our western grain—the beneficial result of our enormous sacrifices in building three trans-continental railways—was diverted last year to Buffalo and New York because we had insufficient grain storage and ocean tonnage at our seaports. This must be remedied, or the commercial interests which hold together our disjoint-

ed provinces will soon cease to exist.

From a local point of view, what are we going to do after the war is over, with the 6,000 men who are now employed in Quebec in building small war vessels and in making rifles and ammunition, unless some such employment is available?

Building these vessels would not be money thrown away. The government would soon have good value for it, in the ships themselves, which should not cost dearer than those now building in the United States, and probably very little dearer than those building in Great Britain. And in doing this, they would give employment to our own people at a critical time, and help to provide tonnage to stop the alarming diversion of our trade from our seaports.

I enclose a clipping from the New York Herald which shows that the United States shipyards have now on the stocks 368 steel steamships, aggregating more than one million tons, and that there are more than twice the number of ships carrying the Stars and Stripes than there were before the war. If they can do this, with wages for shipwrights in their yards as high as 75c an hour, surely we can do much better, with more moderate scale of wages prevailing in Canada.

In my previous letter I omitted to point out that if building commercial steamers would lead to the building of war vessels, as it probably would, even though we are and hope always to be a peaceful people, there could be no better or safer place for a naval construction yard than the port of Quebec—because it is remote from the frontier, and not exposed to raids or incursions which might destroy vessels building in Montreal, only an hour's run from the border. It is also safe from attack by sea, being nearly 800 miles from the Atlantic, and only accessible through a channel which for many miles is narrow and could be commanded by artillery from both shores of the St. Lawrence, and is, therefore, not so liable to attack by sea as Halifax, St. John, or Sydney would be. Ships under construction in the yards here would be under the protection of the guns of the Citadel. Ships built in the yards adjoining the new graving dock here could be launched or docked in winter, almost as well as in summer, as the river at this point is always open and free from floating ice.

The transportation of steel and coal for these shipyards, from Sydney or New Glasgow, to Quebec, Montreal, Halifax or St. John, need not be considered an obstacle, because it would not cost more than the freight on similar articles from Glasgow to Belfast where the largest shipyards in the world are in successful operation and not much more than the cost of moving these materials from the steel works to the shipyards at Sydney, itself.

For all these reasons, I do hope you will advise the government to respond to the wish of the people and take immediate action in the direction of building ocean steamers in Canada.

The Nova Scotia Steel Co.'s President's Views.

Thos. Cantley, President, Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Co., wrote Mr. Scott recently, as follows:—The completion of the new Quebec graving dock, and the natural and other facilities already existing at your port, would certainly warrant you in assuming that steel shipbuilding, whether mercantile or naval, could be carried out as well at Quebec as

at probably any other port in Canada. Not only, as you point out, would the cost of transporting material from New Glasgow or Sydney to Quebec, be as cheap or from Glasgow or Middlesbrough to Belfast, but as a matter of fact, experience in years past has proved that iron and steel products such as angles, plates, etc., have, and can again be delivered from Glasgow or Middlesbrough to Belfast. This, of course, is due to the fact that domestic railway and coasting rates in the United Kingdom are exceedingly high, while ocean freights to Canadian Atlantic ports are practically on a bal-last basis.

Norwegian Vessels to Be Built in Toronto.—An order has been placed with Polson Iron Works Ltd., Toronto, by Hannevig and Johnsen, New York, on behalf of Norwegian parties, for the construction of two steel cargo single screw steamships, for early delivery. They will be of the Frederickstadt type to Bureau Veritas classification, common to the Norwegian trade, with propelling machinery placed amidships. The dimensions will be, length between perpendiculars 251 ft., length over all 261 ft., breadth moulded 43½ ft., depth moulded 22 ft. 11½ ins., and they will be equipped with triple expansion engines with cylinders 20½, 33 and 54 ins. diam., by 36 ins. stroke, 1,300 i.h.p. at 80 r.p.m., and supplied with steam by boilers 14 ft. diam. by 12 ft. long, at 180 lbs. They will also be equipped with 6 cargo winches and the usual pumps and auxiliary apparatus, as well as complete electric lighting plant. The deadweight capacity of each will be about 3,500 tons on 19½ ft. draught.

The Canadian Northern Ry. is building 2 car floats at Port Mann, B.C., for conveying freight cars across Patricia Bay, until the large car ferry which it has decided to build, is ready for service. They were designed by A. Angstrom, Naval Architect, C.N.R., Toronto, and will be 158 ft. long over all, 46 ft. beam over plating, and 48 ft. over wales, and 11½ ft. deep. They will each take 8 large size freight cars. The first one was launched in July. The C.N.R. has bought two whaling steamships, the s.s. Germania and a sister vessel, formerly owned by Canadian Northern Pacific Fisheries, Ltd., which are being changed to make them suitable for towing purposes, and which are to be renamed Chilliwack and Sumas.

Caution to Navigators near Pierre, Miquelon.—The Marine Department has been notified that during August, five vessels were wrecked near Plate Point, Little Miquelon, all during foggy weather. As all of these vessels went ashore at practically the same point, and as others have been wrecked there in the past, it seems probable that there is a definite cause, possibly a current, to which these accidents can be attributed. Until further information is available, mariners should be extremely cautious in this vicinity, especially during foggy weather.

The World's Increased Vessel Tonnage. A press dispatch of Aug. 28, purports to give the decreases and increases of vessel tonnage of the various belligerent and neutral countries for the previous 12 months, and shows a net decrease in tonnage of 1,084,749 tons. Increases shown by Russia, Italy and Norway totalled 223,885 tons, while the other countries showed decreases, the greatest decrease being Germany, 526,946 tons. Great Britain's tonnage decreased 367,037 tons.