INSPECTION OF STEAMBOATS.

Cameron Stanton, Assistant Deputy Minister of Marine, has left for London to discuss with the officers of the British Board of Trade the new steamboat inspection regulations which were made after the Titanic disaster. The new Canadian rules follow in all essential details those adopted by the British board. They will be promulgated before the end of the year.

The conditions with respect to inland navigation will, of course, be varied to suit the service. T. R. Ferguson has been appointed chairman of the Steamboat Inspection Board, and Chas. Duguid, naval architect of the department, has been added to the board. Mr. Ferguson succeeds Edward Adamson, who has retired after long service, and Mr. Duguid will attend to the inspection of hulls.

PRICES FOR STAPLE CROPS.

The average of prices received by producers of the United States for staple crops increased 2.3 per cent from April 1 to May 1, which compares with an increase of 8.4 per cent in the same period a year ago and an average increase of 3.4 per cent during April of the past five years. On May 1 prices of staple crops averaged about 30.1 per cent lower than on like date of 1912, 4.9 per cent lower than in 1911, 13 per cent lower than 1910 and 16.8 per cent lower than 1909 on like date.

The average of prices for meat animals increased 3.7 per cent from March 15 to April 15, which compares with an increase of 10.7 per cent in the same period a year ago. On April 15 prices of meat animals averaged 16.7 per cent higher than on like date a year ago, 26.6 per cent higher than two years ago and 5.1 per cent lower than three years ago.

PENNSYLVANIA RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT.

The annual record of transportation lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad system has just been issued. It shows that the company now has 11,644 miles of line and 25,695 miles of track. There are some 100,000 shareholders interested in these lines, or nearly four for every mile of trackage. The system paid out last year $188,749,312 in wages, or $7,346 for every mile of track, and there are more than eight employees for every mile.

The record reflects the intensive development of the system as demanded by the public, in the direction of improved terminal facilities, second, third and fourth track, yards and sidings, in order to handle increasing traffic economically and promptly.

GRAIN MOVEMENTS.

The latest grain report issued from the head office of the Grain Commissioners at Fort William, Ont., dated May 16th, states there were 18,288,571.97 bushels of grain in store at the Terminal Elevators in the twin cities, as compared with an amount of 13,628,588.17 bushels for the same period of last year. Grain receipts for the week were 4,442,688 bushels and shipments 5,015,374 bushels. There is a large number of vessels in the grain trade this spring, more than ever before. It is stated by the older captains sailing into this port that there is not an idle vessel on the Great Lakes.

—Officials of three express companies say the U.S. parcel post has caused a reduction of 25 to 30 per cent in small package business during the first quarter.

WHITE STAR LINE.

White Star Line report for year ending December 31, shows profit and loss account of $1,927,580.

The report says result of the year's work is considerably reduced by loss of the Titanic, withdrawal of the Olympic for alterations, labour troubles and rise in the price of materials and stores.

An interim dividend of $1,125,000 having been paid March 31, 1912, directors decided to pay no final dividend, making 30 per cent for the year, against 60 per cent in 1911.

Directors expressed regret at the retirement of Bruce Ismay.

WHY ANOTHER MARKET HALTS.

"Confidence," a London reviewer of the Stock Exchange situation concludes, "will require additional proofs that peace is to return to the Near East, and Stock Exchange operators ask for cheaper money and a more general feeling of security. Markets, so far as can be judged, are sound enough, and recent new issues have in most cases met with the reception that they deserved. There is enough of the speculative feeling about to encourage the idea that the bulls have their innings with occasional reactions. Holders of good stock have little cause to worry."

SPECULATING ON NEW FRENCH LOANS.

The new French Government loan, in the opinion of the London Standard's Paris correspondent, "will take the form of an issue of 3 per cent redeemable, under certain conditions, by buying in on the open market. This has not prevented fresh sales of the funds, but bears took care to cover themselves with calls."

ONE VIEW OF CERTAIN NEW LOANS.

The comment of one of the best known financial critics in London is that "there is something rather alarming in the prospect of eight or nine millions of good British money going to an unstable and financially incompetent set of Ministers at Peking, a week or two after eleven millions have been subscribed to the not very competent and highly extravagant Ministers of Brazil."

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THE FRENCH FINANCIAL PUBLIC.

"That, week after week," observes the London "Statist," "and at this time of the year, not only should the Bank of France, which consults so continually and so earnestly the interests of the small trade and the small agriculturist, keep its rate so high for France as 4 per cent, but that the public, instead of grumbling, should keep the rate in the open market at practically the same level, is a phenomenon well calculated to fix attention."