

## U. S. Fleet Growing

According to the annual report of the Commissioner of Navigation for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1915, the merchant marine of the United States, including all kinds of documental shipping, comprised on June 30 last, 26,701 vessels of 8,389,429 gross tons, as compared with 6,943 vessels of 7,928,688 gross tons one year earlier. The year's absolute increase in tonnage, 460,741 gross tons, has never been equalled in the U. S. history. While the total tonnage has increased, the number of documental vessels has decreased 593 in number. The decline in the number of vessels with an increase in the total tonnage is because the size of vessels has been steadily increasing since steel and steam came into general use. In tonnage and value the merchant shipping under the American flag is surpassed only by that under the British flag, and in tonnage it equals that under any other two foreign flags combined except the British.

### THE FIRST CANAL BUILDER.

General Goethals is the latest canal builder to achieve fame, but he has had many predecessors, and the earliest so far as is known was one Naram-Sin, who nearly 5,000 years ago opened a canal from Nippur to the Euphrates. This was discovered by Dr. George A. Barton in deciphering some of the ancient Sumerian tablets at the museum of the University of Pennsylvania. He found a tablet dated "the year when the divine Naram-Sin opened the mouth of the canal Erin at Nippur." This was not an Irish canal, so far as is known, but it was a great event in the history of Nippur, which gave it transportation facilities with the rest of the world. Naram-Sin was a king of Babylonia, and he is responsible only for financing the canal, and slaves probably did the work.

### UNION COMPANY PAYS DIVIDEND.

The directors of the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, Ltd., operators of the Canadian-Australasian Line, have recommended the payment of a final dividend of three and half per cent on the ordinary shares, making, with the interim dividend paid on May 31, a total distribution of 6 per cent for the year.

### BLACK LISTED BOATS.

Britain has blacklisted 102 neutral ships, of 80,000 aggregate tonnage and 200,000 tons freight capacity, on suspicion of trading with her enemies. English shippers are advised not to charter these ships, of which Norway has 38, Sweden 37 and United States 12, with Denmark, Spain, Holland and Brazil also on the list.

### EXPORTING ARMS.

United States exports of arms and ammunition, which now average \$2,500,000 daily, will increase tremendously during next year, reaching their high point by the middle of March. By that time all factories will have attained maximum capacity.

### USING LAKE BOATS.

Charles W. Morse has purchased four freight steamers now in service on the Great Lakes and will bring them to New York to relieve the freight congestion at this port.

### SUGAR SHIP BURNS.

Sugar cargo of Inchmoor loaded at New York for London has been practically destroyed by fire as she lay at her pier in Brooklyn. Steamer carried 3,500 tons of sugar. This is the third British sugar ship destroyed by fire.

### SUEZ INSURANCE RATES.

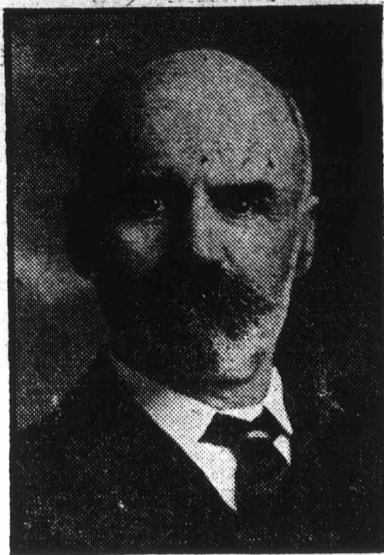
Lloyd's has raised insurance on Suez Canal shipping 300 per cent, resulting in almost complete abandonment of route by shippers. It is taken as indicating impending military developments in that region.

### A SHIPPING MERGER.

Rumored in London shipping circles that the Cunard line has arranged to absorb the Well line steamers, numbering six, and aggregating a tonnage of 30,000.

### A BUSY PORT.

During 1915 total number of vessels arriving at New York was 10,279, increase of 1,076 over 1914.



COL. W. I. GEAR,  
of the Robert Reford Co., Canadian Representative  
of the Cunard Line, which has absorbed the Well  
Line of steamers.

## Nelson's Old Ships

Of the ships which played their part in the great years of Nelson's life one perished before the Battle of Trafalgar, and the others, with the exception of the Victory and the Foudroyant, outlived Nelson by very few years. The Minerva was wrecked near Cherbourg in 1803 while chasing a French frigate. It was in her that Nelson fought his brilliant single-ship action with a Spanish frigate in 1796, and it was in her that he cemented his friendship with Hardy by refusing, though in danger of capture, to leave the spot where Hardy had sprung overboard to save a seaman.

Nelson had two flagships in the Baltic—the St. George and the Elephant. The former went ashore off Jutland in a fearful gale on Christmas Eve, 1811, only twelve hands being saved. The latter was broken up again in 1817 together with the Vanguard, flagship at the Nile. The Agamemnon foundered in Maldonado Bay in 1809. Four years later the Captain, in which Nelson fought at St. Vincent, was destroyed by fire, when moored at Devonport. The last to go was Nelson's flagship in the Mediterranean, the Foudroyant, which went down near Blackpool in 1897—101 years after her baptism of fire.

### B. C. TO GO INTO SHIPPING BUSINESS.

Early in January the B. C. Manufacturers' association will call a meeting of business interests to form a shipbuilding company, in line with the resolution passed by the association some days ago following a meeting when shipbuilding was generally discussed and the need of British Columbia for tonnage was advocated. Incorporation papers for a company have been prepared and a large number of persons have signified their willingness to take shares in the new concern. The provincial government will be asked to guarantee the concern's bonds somewhat after the manner of the guarantee of railway bonds by the government.

### EVEN SPAIN IS BUSY.

Shipbuilding yards of Nervion, Spain, are being enlarged to permit construction of vessels of 1,500 to 5,000 tons for the Spanish merchant marine, according to Consul Hurst at Barcelona.

The Peruvian government is considering construction of a cruiser by the Sociedad Espagnole at Ferrol to displace 2,850 tons, at a cost of \$1,260,000. It is not improbable that orders for other vessels will be placed there by Peru.

The new shipbuilding yards of the Sociedad Espagnole de Construcciones Navales of Bilbao, are shortly to begin on the building of vessels for the Compania Transatlantica of Barcelona.

### RUSSIA'S NEW ROUTE.

The new steamship route from Norway to Russia is now established. As this route will be open throughout the entire year, it is expected that it will be an established benefit to Russia, whose trade difficulties became acute owing to the freezing over of Archangel Bay and the interrupted transit of supplies through Sweden.

Alexandrovsk is on Catherine harbor, an arm of the Arctic Ocean near the Russian-Swedish border.

## The Panama Canal

On Aug. 15, 1914, the Steamship Ancon of the Panama Line successfully made the passage through the Panama Canal and the new highway between the Atlantic and Pacific was officially declared open to commerce. On Sept. 18, 1915, it was officially closed again, owing to slides which formed an impassable barrier to traffic. In the interval between those dates there were some developments which throw light on the probable future use and effects of the canal.

During the period of about thirteen months in which it was open to traffic, the total cargo moved through the canal was 6,706,915 tons, and it is estimated from early returns that approximately 40 per cent of the total was represented by traffic between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the United States. If the estimate is accurate, that would be in the neighborhood of 2,700,000 tons, and of this, probably a trifle less than half was west-bound freight. During the year 1913, statistics show, the total water-moved tonnage from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast of the United States and to the Hawaiian Islands was only 434,115 tons, and the tremendous gain thus made evident in water-moved tonnage between our coasts may be assumed largely to represent traffic lost to the railroads as a result of the construction of the canal. That is an important loss, and one which will undoubtedly grow still larger when the canal is permanently reopened, for the new trade route was being increasingly used by cargo vessels when it was closed by the slides.

Nor was the loss confined to traffic originating on the seaboard. Here is a record of some interior shipments which moved through the canal, noted by way of illustration in the annual report of the Interstate Commerce Commission:

Thirty-two cars of cast-iron pipe from Birmingham, Ala., by rail to New Orleans, and thence by water to the Pacific Coast; paper bags and catsup from Sandy Hill and Rochester, via New York and the ocean to the Pacific Coast; 140 cars of structural steel from points in Pennsylvania via Atlantic Coast ports and water; 1,200 tons of steel rails from Lorain, Ohio, and from 10,000 to 15,000 tons of wrought iron pipe from Youngstown.

Such instance serve to show how the traffic of the railroads was canal route. Thus, the shipment from Youngstown alone represented a loss of perhaps 30,000,000 ton miles, the railroads' unit of traffic. Naturally, under these circumstances, it was necessary for the railroads to reduce rates to meet the new competition, and accordingly the Interstate Commerce Commission granted the carriers in zones affected by the new conditions authority to lower rates on carlots to prescribed points, at the same time fixing a general maximum for intermediate points. Reductions were also made in the rates on shipments of less than a carload.

### NATIONS WHICH USED THE PANAMA CANAL.

(Aug. 15, 1914—Sept. 18, 1915.)

Nationality.	Number of Ships.		Total
	Eastbound.	Westbound.	
American . . . . .	299	304	603
British . . . . .	335	330	665
Chilean . . . . .	23	25	48
Danish . . . . .	15	20	35
Dutch . . . . .	12	3	15
French . . . . .	2	2	4
Honduran . . . . .	3	3	6
Italian . . . . .	2	1	3
Japanese . . . . .	13	4	17
Nicaraguan . . . . .	1	1	2
Norwegian . . . . .	26	37	63
Panamanian . . . . .	5	2	7
Peruvian . . . . .	8	6	14
Russian . . . . .	5	1	6
Swedish . . . . .	12	18	30
Argentinian . . . . .	1	1	2
Total . . . . .	761	758	1,519

### PANAMA CANAL OPERATIONS.

Between August 15, 1914, and June 30, 1915, 530 vessels, representing a net Panama canal tonnage of 1,884,728 and cargo tonnage of 2,125,735 were passed through from Atlantic to Pacific, and 558 vessels, representing a Panama canal tonnage of 2,844,057, and a cargo tonnage of 2,844,057, from Pacific to Atlantic, making a total of 3,843,035 and a cargo tonnage of 4,969,792. During this period three minor slides interrupted traffic, the channel being closed from October 14 to 20 and October 31 to November 4, 1914, and March 4 to 10, 1915.