

These figures would be doubled if we include the area of Greater Vancouver.

**IMPORTS AND EXPORTS:** Imports, \$201,011,919, compared to \$224,000,000 in 1923. Exports, \$169,513,963, compared to approximately \$133,000,000 in 1923.

**CUSTOMS DUTIES:** 1924—\$14,098,717.94

**POST OFFICE:** \$1,135,000.

**SHIPPING:** There are 42 regular steamship lines operating out of the Port. 1009 deep-sea vessels entered the Port during 1924, as compared with 807 in 1923.

The gross tonnage was 14,473,518, over one million tons in excess of 1923.

In view of these figures, gentlemen, is there any reason for pessimism or doubt as to the future? I say there is not.

I will now deal briefly with the work of the Board. You have already had the reports of the various Bureaux Chairmen published in the Board of Trade News; so I will just touch on some of the more important happenings of the past year which are of general interest:—

**HARBOUR DEVELOPMENT:** A great deal of construction work has been done in the way of improving and increasing the facilities of our Port and still more is under way. The additional grain elevator accommodation and improved handling and loading facilities have provided us with the means necessary for handling a very large quantity of grain with speed and cheapness. During the crop year ending 30th September, 1924, 55,873,788 bushels of grain were shipped through this Port, but owing to the very reduced crop in the Western Provinces we will not ship anything like that amount this year. However, we are to-day, with our increased facilities, in a much better position, and we can confidently look forward to the time when all the grain from the greater portion of the Western Provinces will find its way through its natural outlet—the Port of Vancouver. The Second Narrows Bridge is nearing completion, and work on the C. P. R.'s massive new pier is being rapidly pushed forward. It is also worthy of note that within the next sixty days five new modern passenger vessels specially built for our Coastal trade will arrive in Vancouver to ply from this Port.

**PEACE RIVER DEVELOPMENT:** Continued pressure has at last resulted in a declaration from the Federal Government that they are prepared to seriously consider some definite plan for railway communication to this territory, and the Presidents of the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways are at the present time conferring on recommendations to be made to the Government. It has been a long struggle, but your board has never relaxed its pressure upon this important matter. The great possibilities of this territory as the centre of a tremendous colonization effort are incalculable, and the ultimate value which this connection will be to the Coast cannot be estimated.

**OKANAGAN:** Your Board has continued to lend assistance to the fruit growers and I am pleased to tell you that conditions in that territory look more favorable to-day than for some time past.

**NATIONAL ECONOMY:** Your Board, together with the larger Boards throughout Canada, joined in a delegation urging upon the Prime Minister the need for the utmost economy in public expenditures.

**FREIGHT RATES:** As in previous years, your Board gave the strongest support to British Columbia's case for equalization, and the thanks of the en-

tire membership are due to the Provincial Government for the manner in which they have consistently kept up the pressure. It was at the instigation of this Board and other organizations that they took the case up, and we are at last beginning to feel that some results are in sight. In the Hon. H. A. McKeown, K.C., the Board of Railway Commissioners have a capable and fearless chairman, and you will all remember the message that he left with us on his last visit to Vancouver. He is an avowed enemy of unjust discrimination, and we sincerely believe that he and his Board will find a practical solution of this question.

**GRAIN RATES:** Both at the hearings of the Board of Grain Commissioners and the Dominion Royal Commission on Grain Questions, your Board was represented with other organizations in pressing Vancouver's claims.

**CROW'S NEST PASS AGREEMENT:** Your Board realizing that the above Agreement was due to come into effect in July of last year made representations to Ottawa, urging for a further suspension of these rates for a period of two years, or until such time as the whole question could be fully investigated by an independent and impartial tribunal. Notwithstanding the attitude of British Columbia the Agreement was allowed to come into effect. After this Act again became law, it was discovered by certain parts of Canada, both East and West, that very serious discriminations were involved, and the Board of Railway Commissioners, in subsequent hearings, set aside the Agreement, except that portion dealing with grain. The question was then taken to the Supreme Court of Canada, and by its recent decision the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement has been held to be in force, but only as applying to those points of origin and destination to and from which railway lines were actually operating in 1897, the year the Agreement was entered into. This leaves the situation in such a chaotic and anomalous position that the Federal parliament must take early action to remedy it.

**CUSTOMS OFFICER AT NEW YORK:** This question remains in abeyance, and although a Customs Officer has been appointed at New York his certificates are limited to shipments of Canadian goods sailing in British bottoms. A great improvement is noticed, however, in the sailings of the Canadian Government Marine vessels from Montreal and St. John and Halifax to Vancouver. These vessels, together with the Kirkwood Line, are now giving a little better than a monthly sailing. If this can be still further improved, and the rates now quoted can be kept as they are, nothing would please British Columbia better than to be able to ship all her goods by an All-Canadian route and by All-Canadian or British vessels. I would recommend that this question be closely watched during the coming year.

**HORSE RACING:** The Horse Racing program in Vancouver and Victoria had assumed such proportions that your Board decided to make representations and upon a report of a special committee a resolution was adopted calling upon the Government to so restrict same as to make it impossible for the past unsatisfactory and uneconomic conditions to continue. The legislature, as you know, limited the number of days racing to 44, and to certain tracks, and this action, I feel, is satisfactory to the majority of our people.

**PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX:** Notwithstanding the pressure brought to bear, the Provincial Government, for economic reasons, have so far been unable to eliminate this method of taxation, but we still contend that it is unsound in principle and should be entirely abolished.