

The Panama Canal.—The Panama canal, which was opened to commercial traffic on Aug. 15, 1914, is a waterway which is destined to be of the greatest importance to the British Columbian ports, from which vessels now leave direct for Great Britain and European ports throughout the year. As an alternative route to that of the transcontinental railway lines, such a passage by water is of vital importance in the solution of the larger transportation problems of the continent, and while its influence is perhaps more potential than actual, such a check on transcontinental rail rates is a valuable one. During the war the great expectations based upon the opening of the canal were not realized, owing to the scarcity of shipping, but with the decline in ocean freight rates, an increase in traffic between our Pacific ports and Europe is occurring, and while the proportion carried in vessels of Canadian registry is comparatively small, the cargo tonnage has nevertheless assumed considerable proportions. During the year ended June 30, 1924, as will be seen from Table 48, a tonnage of 110,677 originating on our eastern coast and a total of 141,086 tons destined for ports on our western coast was carried through the canal. The greater importance of the route as one from Pacific to Atlantic ports is illustrated by the total of 1,223,102 tons from western ports and 197,204 tons destined for eastern Canadian ports, locked through on the voyage eastward. In the first eight months of 1925, 5 vessels with 14,236 tons of cargo sailed from Canadian Atlantic ports to Canadian Pacific ports, and 8 vessels with 43,787 tons of cargo from Canadian Pacific ports to Canadian Atlantic ports, *via* the Panama Canal; the canal is thus becoming an avenue of trade between Eastern and Western Canada.

The report of the Governor of the Panama Canal Zone for the year 1924 records increases from 1923 of from 3,967 to 5,230 in the number of transits, from 18,605,786 to 26,148,878 in canal net tonnage, from \$17,508,415 to \$24,290,964 in tolls collected and from 19,567,875 to 26,994,710 in tons of cargo carried. (Table 49).

With respect to traffic by nationality of vessels and cargo carried, vessels of United States' registration carried 16,654,435 tons, or 61.7 p.c. of the total cargo of 26,994,710 tons locked through in the year 1924. British vessels carried 6,051,842 tons, or 22.4 p.c., Japanese vessels 935,245 tons, or 3.5 p.c., German vessels 737,103 tons, or 2.7 p.c., and Norwegian vessels 539,101 tons, or 2.0 p.c.

48.—Traffic to and from the East and West Coasts of Canada via the Panama Canal, years ended June 30, 1921-1924.

Years.	From		To	
	Canada West Coast.	Canada East Coast.	Canada West Coast.	Canada East Coast.
	long tons.	long tons.	long tons.	long tons.
1921.....	125,638	39,561	126,414	16,558
1922.....	180,981	25,174	148,305	6,521
1923.....	604,546	92,939	101,588	125,283
1924.....	1,223,102	110,677	141,086	197,204