

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 post-war decline in ocean freight rates, an increase in traffic between our Pacific ports and Europe has taken place, and, while the proportion carried in vessels of Canadian registry is comparatively small, the cargo tonnage has nevertheless assumed considerable proportions.

Table 22 shows the amount of traffic originating in or destined for Canada carried through the canal. The greater importance of the route as one from Pacific to Atlantic ports is illustrated by the much larger volume of freight originating at western ports than at eastern ports, and the larger volume destined for eastern than for western Canadian ports. Strictly inter-coastal Canadian cargo during the latest year aggregated 119,577 long tons as compared with 89,444 long tons in 1935.

22.—Traffic to and from the East and West Coasts of Canada via the Panama Canal, years ended June 30, 1921-36.

Year ended June 30—	Originating on—		Destined for—	
	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
1925.....	1,082,282	121,803	158,709	379,284
1926.....	1,650,855	160,196	168,295	614,580
1927.....	1,548,783	207,003	248,009	803,418
1928.....	2,845,675	168,287	268,960	394,173
1929.....	2,650,646	231,128	266,433	539,767
1930.....	1,968,966	185,776	267,282	556,562
1931.....	2,307,257	137,756	271,621	492,532
1932.....	2,383,211	89,443	167,855	529,317
1933.....	2,896,162	121,875	134,511	328,038
1934.....	2,201,180	196,204	189,227	498,706
1935.....	2,490,203	248,658	176,698	547,974
1936.....	2,705,567	298,884	223,174	506,673

With respect to total traffic through the canal by nationality of vessels and cargo carried, vessels of United States registration carried 10,700,535 tons, or 40.4 p.c. of the total cargo of 26,505,943 locked through in the fiscal year ended June 30, 1936. British vessels carried 6,181,571 tons, or 23.3 p.c.; Norwegian vessels 2,717,860 tons, or 10.3 p.c.; Japanese vessels 1,697,880 tons, or 6.4 p.c.; and German vessels 1,305,090 tons, or 4.9 p.c.

* Revised, and figures supplied, by courtesy of the Governor of the Panama Canal Zone.