

PRINCIPAL EVENTS OF THE YEAR 1914.

after sittings in Halifax, N.S., St. John, N.B., and Charlottetown, P.E.I. Although the labours of the Commission were thus suspended, extensive information regarding Canada had been collected in advance and is in course of completion, as far as possible, by correspondence.¹

Opening of the Panama Canal.—One of the world's greatest engineering enterprises was completed in 1914 by the formal opening to commercial traffic on August 15 of the canal which connects the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans across the Isthmus of Panama in Central America. The later history of this great project dates from the beginning of the present century, when under an Act of Congress, dated June 28, 1902 (known as the Spooner Act) the Government of the United States purchased for \$40,000,000 the property of the French Canal Company which succeeded the original corporation formed by the late M. Ferdinand de Lesseps in 1879. The actual transfer of the property was effected on May 4, 1904. After solution of the difficult problem of sanitation by extirpation of the mosquitoes carrying the germs of yellow fever and malaria, the work of construction was proceeded with, at first by the Isthmian Canal Commission authorized by the Spooner Act, but subsequently by a new Commission appointed on April 1, 1905, and reorganized in 1907, with General (then Colonel) George W. Goethals as Chairman and Chief Engineer. Up to August 1, 1914, the total amount of canal excavation was 224,073,363 cubic yards, the amount of excavation then remaining to be done being estimated at 14,722,224 cubic yards. The largest amount of excavation in a single year was 37,116,735 cubic yards in 1908. Up to June 30, 1914, the total receipts for canal purposes amounted to \$360,920,975, including Congressional appropriations of \$352,205,669 and miscellaneous receipts from water rentals, sale of government property, etc. The total expenditure for the canal up to June 30, 1914, amounted to \$349,555,834, leaving an available balance of \$11,365,141. Nearly two-thirds of the total canal expenditures have been paid from current revenues, bonds having been issued only to the amount of \$135,000,000.² At the close of the United States fiscal year on June 30, 1915, comprising a period of 10½ months from August 14, 1914, the total traffic through the canal was 1,088 vessels carrying cargoes of the total tonnage of 4,969,792. Of these totals, 530 vessels and 2,125,735 tons were eastbound and 558 vessels and 2,844,057 tons were westbound. The tolls earned by the Canal during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1915, amounted to \$4,424,256.³

Arctic Exploration.—On July 21, 1913, a Canadian Government expedition in command of Mr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson sailed in three

¹The following Reports and Minutes of Evidence of the Commission have been published in London, England: First Interim Report, 1912 [Cd. 6,515]; Second Interim Report, 1914 [Cd. 7,210]; Minutes of Evidence, Part I, Migration, 1912 [Cd. 6,516]; Part II, Natural Resources, Trade and Legislation, 1912 [Cd. 6,517]; New Zealand, 1913 [Cd. 7,170]; Australia, Part I, 1913 [Cd. 7,171]; Australia, Part II [Cd. 7,172]; London, 1913 [Cd. 7,173.]

²The Panama Canal, by T. W. Van Metre in the American Year Book, 1914, pp. 282-287.

³For other articles on the Panama Canal, see Weekly Bulletin of the Department of Trade and Commerce, Ottawa, Vol. XIII, 1915, Nos. 586, 596, 603, 604 and 606.