

In 1855, when the first "Soo" lock was opened to commerce, the tonnage passing through was only 106,295 tons, there being at that time a depth of only ten feet over the sill. In 1891 a new lock was opened, with sixteen feet over the sill, and the St. Mary's River shoals were deepened. During that year 2,000,000 tons passed through. In 1895 two new locks were constructed, with twenty-one feet over the sill, and in 1896 the traffic had increased to 16,806,781 tons, and in 1898 the tonnage passing the "Soo" amounted to 21,284,664 tons. To-day the big 400-foot freighters carry cargoes at one-tenth the amount received when the channels were only eight to ten feet in depth. The low rate of water transportation has also forced the railways to lower their rates on all bulky articles correspondingly; and thus a commerce has been built up which would have been impossible had there been no great waterway. It is claimed therefore, that the new canal will increase materially the yearly tonnage, and will reduce the rates of transportation to a considerable degree.

Possibly the most important function of the new waterway will be its use as a channel for the shipment of coal westward. The transportation of grain and ore from the West and North-West has fallen into the hands of the steamship companies in greater proportion each year. The special value of the St. Clair and Erie Canal in this connection, say the promoters, is because of a singular fact. Across Lake Erie from east of Port Pelee, and the islands of the south shore, there is an open belt of clear water all through the winter. Here a line of car-ferries could run from Cleveland, Sandusky, and Toledo to the canal, with scarcely any danger of an ice jam. Coal could thus be transported direct to the canal without breaking bulk the year

round, and transferred in cars to the western railways. This would be the transfer station for the coal used in Western Ontario, and for much to be distributed in the West, the transportation of which is now monopolized by the railways.

ANOTHER CANADIAN ENTERPRISE.

The Quebec, Hamilton and Fort William Navigation Company, with headquarters at Hamilton, Ont., are applying for incorporation with a capital stock of \$1,000,000.

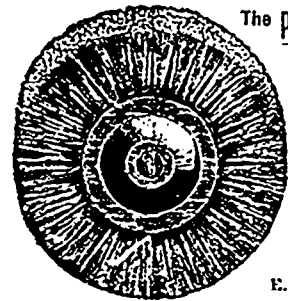
The purposes for which incorporation is sought are to construct, acquire and navigate steam and other vessels for the conveyance of passengers, goods and merchandise between the ports of Canada and to and from any port in any other country, and to carry on the business of common carriers and forwarders, wharfingers and warehousemen, and to deal in goods, wares and merchandise. The applicants for incorporation are A. T. Wood, merchant; Hon. W. E. Sanford, senator, manufacturer (since deceased); William Southam, publisher; W. D. Long, merchant; C. S. Wilcox, manufacturer; C. E. Doolittle, manufacturer, and A. B. Mackay, wharfinger, all of Hamilton, these to be the provisional directors.

It is the intention of the company to proceed as soon as possible with the construction, at Hamilton, of two steamers, each of 2,000 tons or over—as large as the new St. Lawrence canals will admit, these two to be followed by others.

The company will have the advantage, to begin with, of the carrying of ore from the Lake Superior company to the Hamilton smelter—a considerable business in itself—and will be in a position to take advantage of the great increase in the shipment of grain by the St. Lawrence route which must follow upon the completion of the new St. Lawrence canals.

NEW MACHINERY HALL.

Having reference to the machinery hall of the Toronto Industrial Exhibition which was recently destroyed by fire, the Parks and Exhibition Committee of the Toronto City Council, who have the matter in hand, have contracted for the erection of a better and more up-to-date building on the old site, to cost \$13,080. It is not anticipated that there will be any delay in the construction of the building. It will be equipped with all necessary steam power, shafting, etc., and all usual requisites for the display of machinery in motion, etc.



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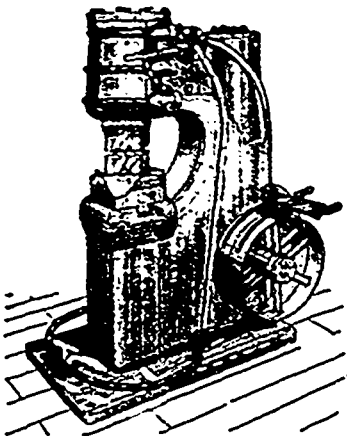
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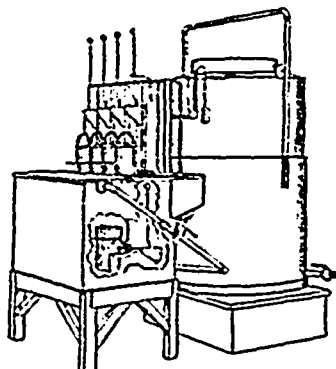
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