

Shipbuilding in Canada.

EASTERN Canada was formerly one of the great shipbuilding countries of the world. Its many hundreds of miles of sea coast, indented with harbours, coupled with the possession of immense areas of splendid forest growth, created the conditions for a shipbuilding industry, which, until a generation ago, was one of almost unchecked progress and development. A hundred towns grew up within sight of the sea, each possessing shipyards and a population employed in either building, repairing, outfitting, owning or sailing vessels. Our flag became known in all seas, and Canada assumed a place as one of the four great ship owning countries of the world.

The advent of steel shipbuilding struck a fatal blow at this great source of our wealth and prosperity.

The increase in the size of vessels from 2,000 tons to 20,000 tons, made possible by the use of steel, added to greater durability and lessened insurance, effected such a reduction in the rates of ocean freights, that wooden ships could no longer compete, and shipbuilding was transferred to British yards where iron, coal, skilled labor and capital were cheaper than in any other country. The loss of business, capital, income and employment, in which at least one-fourth of the people were interested, is one from which Eastern Canada has not yet recovered.

Natural products of the soil, sea, mine, and forest can only be made valuable by adequate transportation facilities. The two countries possessing the most extensive and highly developed transportation systems are Great Britain and the United States. (Note 1.)

Note 1.—The American Railways represent an investment of over \$10,000,000,000 and an earning power of over \$600,000,000. British ships represent a capital investment of \$750,000,000 and earning power of \$450,000,000.