

toward the Dartmouth shore. We landed and ran into the woods. About twenty minutes after we left the ship we heard the explosion. It knocked nearly everyone of us down and we were struck by bits of the trees and other things, but only the gunner was seriously injured. He has since died."

What Explosion Meant to the City.

Few were they who saw that abandoned steamer drifting towards the Halifax piers wrapped in a cloud of smoke and flame, who realized the load of death she carried. In twenty minutes it was all over. The clocks which I saw in the ruined buildings of the North end were stopped at 9.07 o'clock and this evidently was the exact time of the explosion. More than 1500 died within the hour in the cataclysm which followed, the whole of Richmond was left a smoking waste, buildings in all parts of the city shattered, two hundred were totally blinded, thousands injured, whole families wiped out. To adequately sum up the destruction, the damage and the suffering seems impossible. My whole book scarcely suffices to convey what that awful concussion brought to the Citadel City. I find however the following paragraphs in the preliminary report of Thomas Adams, Town planning adviser to the Canadian Commission of Conservation:

"From investigations made, it appears that about 794 residences and other private buildings have been completely destroyed; 337 partially destroyed and 394 injured to an extent from 15 per cent to 30 per cent of their former value. In addition about 5,000 buildings in the city have been injured in part. About 1,500 buildings will have to be rebuilt in the whole city to accommodate the homeless population, numbering about 9,000 persons.

"To provide temporary housing for 9,000 people, even with the assistance of the Militia Department, and to rebuild their homes or erect others in lieu of those destroyed, and to repair the injuries to other buildings, may mean an expenditure of \$6,000,000. This will be apart from the heavy expense to be incurred by the Federal Government and the city of Halifax in re-instating public buildings, railway rolling stock, etc., and also apart from the large expense which will be involved in providing for the maintenance of the permanently injured and the re-adjustment of business which has been temporarily dislocated."

So much for the property loss, which is described in detail in a later chapter. The story of what followed that terrible explosion concerns us here. All the horrors of war were crowded into a brief space of time and forced upon the stricken people. Hundreds died from the shock alone. With the fall of