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## CHANGING HALIFAX BY ARCHIBALD MACMECHAN

WITH PICTURES BY GYRTH RUSSELL

THRONE<sup>d</sup> on her rocky peninsula between the Harbour, the Basin and the Arm, crowned with her star-shaped citadel, and girdled by the blue salt water, Halifax, the City of the Triple Haven, looks eastward over the Atlantic. In the very middle of the eighteenth century the Honourable Edward Cornwallis had the original town hewed out of the spruce wood which clothed the hillside sloping steeply to the beach. City-planning was still medieval. The ideal was a fortified enclosure, designed to accommodate the maximum number of inhabitants within the minimum of space. So Halifax was laid out by military engineers, with narrow streets, fenced in by a rough abattis of felled trees and block-houses. Those were dangerous times. The Micmacs captured or shot and scalped the unwary soldier or settler who ventured "outside the pickets," and soon the Seven Years War broke out and life was still less secure. The fortifications were strengthened and stone-faced batteries were built along

the water-front. From the harbour, Halifax used to look like a walled town. Along the water-front ran a line of embrasures, each with its black-mouthed gun.

From 1749 to the present day the business centre of Halifax has been the original nucleus about George Street, at the foot of which stood the pillory and the gallows. The city expanded in the only two possible directions, northward and southward. The north suburbs were named Göttingen by settlers from the Rhineland and the south suburbs were called Irish-town. The huge central boss of land which dominated all was naturally used as a fort from the first, like the acropolis of the most ancient city. Between its base and the water, Halifax has grown, decayed, has been built and rebuilt for a century and a half.

The middle of the nineteenth century brought in the age of steam, a magic power the city founder never dreamed of. Halifax must be joined by iron bands, first with the chief