

# CONSTRUCTION

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## *The Halifax Disaster*

The disaster at Halifax caused by the explosion of the munition ship *Mont Blanc*, is one of those overwhelming calamities which fate now and again deals from an entirely unexpected source. Its totally destructive character, involving an enormous death toll and great loss of property, has both shocked the entire continent and quickened a sympathetic response from all of Canada and the Eastern States in hastening to the assistance of the afflicted population. Supplies of food and clothing are already pouring into the stricken city in generous quantities from every quarter, but more than food and clothing will be required to approach anything which will give even a fair measure of relief. One of the most urgent needs will be for materials and building equipment to provide shelter for the homeless thousands, and for re-establishing the devastated area of the business and manufacturing section. Already the authorities with commendable enterprise have entered upon the task of organizing towards this end, and the tremendous work before them is best realized when one considers the estimate given in the press of the destruction of twenty-five thousand homes alone. This does not take into account the many large industrial plants, such as the Arcadia

Sugar Refinery, the Hollis Foundry, and other large enterprises, including commercial and public buildings, which have been wrecked and damaged. The loss on schools, churches, etc., is likewise heavy. A message sent out by the Catholic diocese and which affects one denomination alone, reads as follows: "Terrible loss, church, rectory, hall, schools, absolutely demolished. Not one family intact in parish."

All this points to the great suffering and destitute circumstances to which Halifax has been reduced, and how necessary and urgent it is for every section of the Dominion to lend a helping hand. Much of the rebuilding of the city will have to be done quickly, and may, perhaps, to an extent be of a temporary character, although it is definitely announced that the authorities have in mind a plan of reconstruction which will give a great improvement over the physical aspect of things as they existed heretofore. A report, in fact, has already been submitted by Thomas Adams, town planning expert of the Conservation Commission, and the Board of Control has decided to request Premier Murray to call a conference of the City Council, the Board of Trade, the Provincial Government, the Federal Government, the Executive of the Relief Committee, the Town Planning Board, and the Naval and Military authorities, with a view to having a permanent Commission appointed to deal with the problems now confronting the city.

In the meantime the building fraternity can possibly do a great deal by co-operating fully with the authorities in fulfilling every demand for materials and supplies, and by giving every assistance required. That there will be some very interesting data gathered as to the effect of the explosion on certain structural elements is altogether probable, and together with observations of sanitary and other conditions, will eventually give architects and engineers much information of value and assistance.

## *Saskatchewan Association Elects Officers*

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year at the annual meeting of the Saskatchewan Association of Architects, held recently at Regina: President, R. G. Bunyard, Moose Jaw; vice-presidents, J. H. Puntin, Regina, and N. L. Thompson, Saskatoon; secretary-treasurer, Francis B. Reilly, Regina; members of council, Professor Greig, Saskatoon; A. J. Creighton, Prince Albert, and W. G. Van Egmond, Regina.

The business of the meeting was chiefly routine. Mr. Reilly, the secretary, reports that the war has curtailed building operations in the province, but that general business conditions are improving and will tend to stimulate activities in this line. The membership roll of the association includes a list of fifty enlistments.