

the office of Steidtmans at a scrumpy salary for the joy of learning what it feels like to study shipping at first hand. He came back to Montreal. While still a young man he got into politics, member in the Quebec Legislature for the St. Lawrence division of Montreal, where he showed that he was no back-bencher, but a real constructionist.

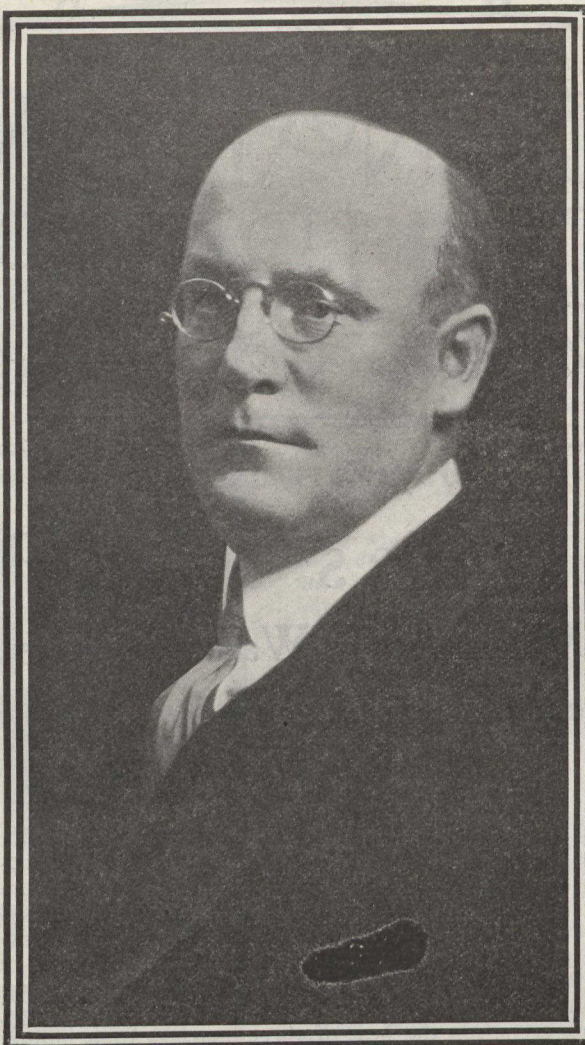
In 1907 the Laurier Government took hold of the Port of Montreal and the St. Lawrence route. Gridironing the west with railroads and pumping in immigrants by hundreds of thousands a year had left the big Port out of the race. Practical comparisons begin with the century. In 1900 the Port of Montreal had a few docks, some ships, wooden sheds, disorganized railway tracks, mud ankle-deep, more traffic than it could capably handle, and several hundred per cent. less traffic than it had room for. The St. Lawrence route was a narrow channel 27½ feet deep, capable of carrying ships to 5,000 tons. The old Commission put in a few years at some effort to improve the muddle. The Commission was too big; too much obsessed with politics both local and general; lacking concentration—and administration. The Commissioners mapped out part of the present scheme of improvements. They mapped out more than they could achieve. The Commission gradually went to pieces. It was too much of a Board and too little of a Commission. The system, or the lack of it, far more than the men, was to blame. The country behind Montreal was ten times too potentially big for the Port. New York and Boston and Portland were grabbing the transports. Montreal was known as a glorious bit of landscape and water-front, with a great river, a lot of church towers and a few ships. With some signs of expansion in shipping, and the headquarters of two great railway systems, it was still considerably the melancholy picture of mediaeval Canada.

**B**EFORE 1907 G. W. Stephens had got his eyes opened. Before he was appointed President of the Harbour Commission he went abroad and made a comparative study of European ports. He visited London and Liverpool, Hamburg and Paris and Amsterdam, Glasgow and Southampton and Bristol, and as many more as he could find. When he got back he wrote a series of twelve letters to the *Montreal Herald* on, "European Ports Seen Through Canadian Eyes."

"Well," he said, "when I went away from here I used to think what a magnificent harbour we had in Montreal. When I got through with that trip, I realized that we were away back in the woods of shipping; that ports of the world with far less natural facilities and much less potential business behind them were making us look by comparison like—"

He did not say Toronto Bay.

When it became necessary to get a real administration of the big harbour, public opinion inde-



The President of the Harbour Commissioners as He Looks To-day After Five Years of Organizing Enthusiasm.

pendent of politics united to say that G. W. Stephens was the one best man for the head of it. The three were appointed in 1907. They are still there—Stephens, C. C. Ballantyne, and L. E. Geoffrion. They were given an absolutely free hand by the Liberal Government to develop the Port of Montreal on a national basis by borrowing money from the Government; to administer the Port on a revenue basis to make money—as it is doing every year.

The turn came. No longer was it true that the railways were hopelessly outdistancing the big Port. All the improvements mooted by the old Commission were carried out—and augmented. The disjunctive, ramshackle old Port which for seventy-seven years

had been more or less feebly trying to get its hooks on to the ships of the world began to consolidate and unify. It began to be administered by a trio of business men who regarded our first national port as a phase of national business.

Major Stephens is the one of the three who is constantly on the job. The other two are at their desks every day, but not all day. They have other business. One has so much business that he may offer to retire from the Commission. It is a problem whether with the expansion of the Port it will not be necessary to make the Commission exclusive—but including Major Stephens.

**I**N 1908 he retired from the Legislature. He had the one job that all his life he had been studying, just because he was interested in shipping. He had the time to give it the benefit of a big experience, the wealth to give him a standing in the commercial community as good as any man in Montreal; and he had the enthusiasm and the constructive imagination to organize the big Port. In 1909 he went abroad again, when his friends said something radical might happen to him before he got back. Something did; and it was more radical than being head commissioner. He married a Signorita of Naples. As an incidental to the same trip he prepared a report on the drydock situation. Here the Major fished up a photograph of the completed structure which this summer will float across the Atlantic to be installed five miles east at the present end of the harbour. A mere detail, but a distinct phase of progress; for the ports of Canada are in the matter of drydocks—behind the times.

"See here," he said, waving an arm at the busy enchantment of the harbour. "Doesn't it touch your imagination to realize that here a thousand miles from sea the ships of the world tie up?"

"Is there any other big seaport so far from the sea?"

"None. But remember—that thousand miles of protected and commercially productive river is less than half the immense inland waterway tributary to Montreal."

He pointed an imaginative finger at the great lakes.

"Heavens! what a benevolent conspiracy of nature!"

He proceeded to show what the continents of the world would look like if the waterway system tributary to Montreal, both before and behind, were laid down—at New York, at Hamburg, at Rio Janeiro, at Capetown, at Hongkong or Calcutta.

Imagination! We had the biggest thing of its kind in the world. And as yet we had just begun to develop it.

He spoke of the future. Leaving out all consideration of cargoes that come in from what port soever—always increasing, since by trade reports

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## Festival of Welcoming Summer in British Columbia



Scene at Queen's Park, New Westminster, Where the Royal City's Annual May-Day Fete Heralded Summer in Recently. Thousands of Visitors Witnessed the Exercises—the Parade, the Various Manoeuvres on the Green, and the Twining of the May-pole. Happy Children Were the Chief Participants, and Youth, Mirth and Carnival Held Sway. The Gala Day Eclipsed Every Former Success—Though a Forty-two Years' Institution.