

the causes of the decline of the trade of New York City is still sitting, he adds: "The trade of that city has declined because it was too much controlled by private interests, the full expansion of business having been handicapped." It is quite possible that this statement has a local application to Montreal, and that the mayor perceives it.

In the course of their eminently practical visit to eight seaboard ports of the United States the commissioners have seen much that should acquaint them with the kind of conveniences modern commerce requires, and should stimulate them to provide these facilities at Montreal. Assuredly there is nothing narrow or timid about Mr. Prefontaine's expressions. He goes so far as to say that Montreal is naturally in a better position to do all that is needed for the perfecting of her export facilities than either New York, Boston, Jersey City, Philadelphia, Portland, Brooklyn, Baltimore or Newport News. Now, says the mayor, this Montreal Harbor Commission controls the entire river front of the city. To equip Montreal harbor in a way worthy of her splendid natural position "railway facilities, dry docks, grain elevators, warehouses, and sheds must be provided and the handling of grain made as cheap, if not cheaper, than anywhere else. We have seen all this machinery elsewhere, and now it only remains for us to make the application here in the port of Montreal."

A port which attracts in one navigable season nearly nine hundred sea-going vessels, of a total capacity of a million and a half tons, whose imports are entered at sixty-one millions of dollars and her exports at sixty three millions, is one in which Canadians may justly take pride. Now that her authorities have learned what things are needed to put Montreal on a par with other Atlantic ports as to the handling of merchandise, let us hope that no time will be lost in providing them. Not in a niggardly way; not *a bis et a blanc*, but in steady pursuance of an adequate and consistent plan.

#### MONTREAL BOARD OF TRADE.

One hundred and seventy members assembled at the annual meeting of the Montreal Board of Trade this week. A large attendance was appropriate and to be expected, seeing that matters of moment to the interests of the city were to be discussed. The address of the retiring president was that of a clear-headed man of long experience in business. He recognized and said in plain terms that the port of Montreal had suffered great loss of export business by many years' delay in adequate arrangements in the harbor for modern shipping. It is at the same time a satisfaction to learn that work has been begun on one of the new piers, the high level plan having been definitely adopted. No doubt exists, we are told, in the mind of any of the commissioners who visited United States harbors that the high level plan is that best suited for Montreal. It is properly urged by the president in his address that in the present prosperous condition of Canada it is of great moment to the country that her principal export harbor should have an up-to-date equipment without delay.

For more than forty-five years Mr. Crathern has been in business in Montreal, and in that time has passed through various periods of mercantile and financial depression. But "at no time," he says, "have I known the commercial and financial interests of the country to have been on a sounder or better footing than at present." Such an assurance, according as it does with the views of other business men and bankers, is very encouraging. His favorable opinion is supported, too, by a number of statistics, showing the excess of our exports and the accumulation

of deposits in the banks. One of Mr. Crathern's concluding paragraphs refers to the admirable equipment of Montreal's McGill College by the munificence of her citizens. Thus: "The advantages of this improved mechanical, technical and scientific education now obtainable, will, in the near future, through improved machinery and increased knowledge, be visible in the working of our forests, our mines, and our mills and factories, reducing, as I anticipate, the cost of production and waste to a minimum." Wise words, these. In modern days of enforced economy in all commercial and industrial affairs, the intelligent conduct of technological matters is of enormous value to a nation.

Much attention was given at the meeting to considering ship-channel matters, pilotage, &c., which are subjects of moment to Montreal. It was strongly contended by Mr. D. G. Thomson that the current statements that Montreal is a dear port for tonnage to visit are not true. His opinion, formed after a trip down the Atlantic coast as harbor commissioner, is that Montreal is well to the front; and instead of being the most expensive port, it is one of the cheapest ports on the North Atlantic. For this and other reasons, Mr. Thomson, as representing the Board of Trade on the Harbor Commission declared himself as anxious as anyone for a reduction of the harbor dues, but he did not think that the present was the time for making such reduction.

A suggestion made by Mr. W. W. Ogilvie seems to us to deserve consideration. The matter of buoying and lighting the Lower St. Lawrence by the government officials instead of by contract being advocated as tending to the safety of the route to Montreal, Mr. Ogilvie said the resolution should be made to include the St. Lawrence above Montreal as well, for reasons which he advanced. The present method sometimes shortens an already short season for barges going to Montreal from the west.

#### THE YEAR'S COAL OUTPUT.

Operations in the Maritime Province coal fields have been fairly active in 1898. The approximate output of the Dominion Coal Company's mines for the year was 1,135,200 tons, compared with 1,251,295 tons in 1897, an increase for 1898 of 116,095 tons. The approximate shipments for 1898 were 1,228,241 tons, compared with 1,122,741 tons in 1897, an increase of 105,500 tons. Some of the collieries produced enormous outputs during different months of the year. In six months Dominion No. 1 pit raised over 250,000 tons; Reserve, 180,000 tons, and Caledonia 200,000. New machinery has been added in different collieries and the shipping facilities greatly improved the past year. We are not in possession of the returns of the smaller producers, which will add to the total output of Nova Scotia, but the Acadia mines, the Joggins mines and the Spring Hill mines have been fairly busy.

The past year has witnessed a marked increase in the production of coal on the Canadian Pacific Coast. The output of coal there has surpassed all previous records, amounting to over 1,125,000 tons. For the first time, too, the product of Vancouver Island mines has been supplemented by deliveries from newly-opened fields in the Crow's nest district. These latter supplies will increase with the development of the Crow's Nest field, which is being most energetically undertaken. The increased business done in British Columbia this past year has afforded an outlet for the larger production. There has also been a much better market in California. San Francisco supplies of Australian and English household grades are almost nil, as the high inward freights from those sections have almost prohibited their importation. The deliveries there