

These figures refer only to the steam vessels engaged in the foreign trade of the country, and compared with similar returns from the ports of Halifax, Baltimore and Quebec, they stand thus for the year 1881:

#### STEAMSHIPS ENGAGED IN FOREIGN TRADE

Entered inwards at Halifax . . 362.	Tonnage, 459,278
" " Baltimore 311.	" . . . . .
" " Quebec . . 157.	" 292,297

Correct returns from other ports have not yet been received, but will be added in an appendix, together with more full returns from the above ports, if they can be obtained.

From the above it will be seen that the number of ocean steamships entering the Harbour of Halifax is nearly twenty per cent. more than at the port of Baltimore, and exceeds the entries at Quebec Harbour by over one hundred and thirty per cent.

When it is also considered that the St. Lawrence is sealed up by ice for five months out of the year; that this is the natural Winter Port of the Dominion, and Her Majesty's chief Naval Station in North America, besides being the Atlantic terminus of our great inter-provincial system of railways, and, in a military point of view, the key to Canada, I do not think that much stronger arguments need be urged to impress upon both the Imperial and Dominion authorities our claims to substantial aid in so important an enterprise as the Halifax Graving Dock.

Your obedient servant,

E. H. KEATING.

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ERRATA.—Page 19, line 14 from bottom,—for No. 2 read No. 3.