

# The Canadian Engineer

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## HALIFAX

**D**ESPITE the terrible effects of the "Mont Blanc" explosion, or perhaps partly as a result of it, Halifax is to-day one of the most prosperous cities in Canada. Halifax has recovered courageously and splendidly from the effects of the explosion, and when the devastated area has been rebuilt according to a modern town-plan, Halifax will rise great and glorious from the ashes.

Assuming that the government will give Halifax its due, nothing can prevent that port from becoming one of the most famous in the world. It has all the natural advantages, physical and geographical, for ultimately becoming one of the busiest, if not the busiest, on the American continent.

The recent announcement by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries that the government has awarded contracts enabling the location of a shipbuilding industry at Halifax, is fine news. Halifax needs shipbuilding very much indeed. Without a big shipbuilding plant, the port could never attain its proper place in the world's shipping trade.

The taking over by the government of the Halifax Graving Dock Company's property is also a step in the right direction. A larger dock is needed at Halifax, but competition between the old privately owned dock and a new government dock would be unfortunate. The acquisition of the private dock enables the co-ordination of all terminal facilities at Halifax. The dock was practically public property anyway, being adjacent to the naval dock-yard and being devoted, at the present time at least, largely to the repair of vessels directly associated with war work.

The Federal Government's \$30,000,000 scheme for the development of Halifax harbor, which was announced some years ago, is still mostly on paper. A relatively

small portion of the quay wall has been finished, some temporary sheds have been erected and a contract was recently awarded for a temporary station and car repair facilities; but a photograph of the Halifax terminals at present would not much resemble the architect's drawing of the finished project. It is to be hoped that the Dominion Government will go ahead with the development of this harbor as vigorously as possible. Financing of war needs, of course, must have the first consideration; but it is to be hoped that some way will be found of getting Halifax harbor into such shape that it will not be hopelessly behind in the race for trade after the war.

Notwithstanding the activity of Hun submarines, the tonnage of the principal American and Canadian ports has greatly increased since the war began. In 1913 the tonnage of the port of New York amounted to 28,000,000 tons, whereas for 1917 it rose to 34,000,000; and on account of the value of the shipments it became the leading port of commerce of the world, its exports last year totalling \$1,964,000,000, whereas London, which had for years held the foremost place, dropped from \$2,004,600,000 in 1913 to \$1,867,000,000 in 1917.

This tendency toward increases in the American trade has extended to Canada on a smaller scale. The returns for 1917 make Halifax the third port on the American continent, on the Atlantic coast. In 1913 the Halifax tonnage amounted to 3,182,923 tons; in 1917 it totalled 17,092,911 tons, although part of this was "examination" tonnage. The figures for the year 1918 have greatly exceeded the 1917 figures for the corresponding months, some months showing an increase of over 100 per cent. as compared with the corresponding periods of last year.

Many Canadians do not realize the importance of the port of Halifax. Arguments are brought forth such as the "long rail haul," whereas the same export freight rate exists through all the North Atlantic ports. While there is a published differential of one cent against the port of Halifax, this is practically on paper only. The steamship, as a rule, absorbs it.

In 1913 Halifax bank clearings totalled \$105,347,626, whereas in 1917 they had increased to \$151,812,752. The figures for 1918 show continued increase.

The set-back which was suffered by the port of Halifax as a result of the explosion on December 6th, 1917, was of a very temporary nature so far as the commercial welfare of the city was concerned.

## CONSERVATION AT NIAGARA FALLS

**T**RUE conservation is being practised at Niagara Falls in the Chippawa-Queenston Power Development. With the tremendous energy shortage in Ontario—neither fuel nor electrical energy being available in sufficient quantities—it would be extremely wasteful not to utilize every second-foot of the 36,000 c.f.s. allotted to Canada as permissible diversion from Niagara Falls, under the treaty between Great Britain and the United States. And so far as possible it should all be used in high head development. Were the whole 36,000 c.f.s. passed through the Queenston power house, it would yield over a million horse-power, compared with less than half that figure if used under existing conditions. Ontario cannot afford to waste that extra half million horse-power. Nor can the United States afford to lose the extra 100 ft. head that the Queenston scheme affords compared with the best conditions now available on that side of the line. The world war has brought Canada