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A REVIEW
of
BUILDING PERMITS
in
CANADA
during
1923

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A REVIEW OF BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED IN CANADA DURING 1923.

Building activities in 56 cities with
comparisons from 1920.

Activity in building, as indicated by statistics of building permits tabulated by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, was somewhat less in 1923 than during 1922, but much greater than in both 1921 and 1920. According to revised statements furnished by municipal officials, the value of building authorized in 56 cities during 1923 was \$129,906,946; in 1922 it was \$144,980,308, in 1921, \$114,423,974 and in 1920, \$114,239,273. There was, therefore, a decline of 10.4 per cent as compared with 1922, but increases of 13.5 and 13.7 per cent, respectively, as compared with 1921 and 1920. Table 1 on page 4 gives the value of building permits issued in these cities during the last four years.

Comparative building activities of Provinces.

An analysis of the returns by provinces shows that the value of the building permits issued in Quebec was higher than in 1922, 1921 or 1920. This province, with a total of \$35,483,853, registered increases of 17 per cent, 23 per cent and 63 per cent respectively, over those years. In Ontario, there was a decrease of nine per cent as compared with 1922 and increases of 24 per cent over 1921 and 27 per cent over 1920. The aggregate for the province in 1923 was \$71,378,679. In Ontario reports were furnished by 26 cities; these centres granted permits for approximately 55 per cent of the total value of the permits issued in the 56 cities. In Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta there were considerable declines as compared with the three preceding years. In British Columbia the volume of building authorized was less by 23 per cent than in 1922, but it exceeded the totals for 1921 and 1920 by 17 and 48 per cent respectively. The six cities in Quebec reported some 27 per cent of the aggregate for the 56 cities, while nearly 9 per cent of the total was registered in British Columbia.

Comparative building activities of leading cities.

The largest aggregate of building permits issued in any one city was again reported in Toronto, with a total of \$30,609,227. The value of authorized building in 1922 was \$35,237,927, which was 13.1 per cent higher than in 1923. The value for last year, however, exceeded that for 1921 and 1920 by 28 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively. Montreal recorded the next largest total, with estimated building to the value of \$27,125,863. This was higher by 28, 27 and 93 per cent than in 1922, 1921 or 1920, respectively. In the Township of York (a suburban area adjoining Toronto) the value of authorized building aggregated \$8,921,650, which was the third largest total in the Dominion. The value there was rather less than in the year before, although it exceeded the figures for both 1921 and 1920. Considerable activity was shown in Vancouver, where the estimated value of building totalled \$6,277,574. This was 28 per cent less than in 1922, but permits then had been exceptionally high on account of authority having been granted for the construction of a government pier at a cost of some \$5,000,000. The total for Vancouver in 1923 was 106 per cent higher than the aggregate for 1921 and 76 per cent above the total for 1920. The city of Hamilton,

with permits issued to the value of \$5,452,930, took fifth place in the record of individual cities. This total was higher than in any of the three preceding years. Quebec, Windsor, and Winnipeg came next in order; the permits issued in each of these cities were valued at between four and five millions. In the last named centre the total in 1923 was lower than in 1922, 1921 or 1920. Building to the value of over a million was recorded in Ottawa, London, Port Arthur, Point Grey, Westmount, Oshawa, Kitchener, Edmonton, Port William, Regina and Victoria.

Building activities by months.

A review of the reports by months shows that the highest total was recorded in April, when the permits issued were valued at \$19,207,171. This was 15 per cent of the total for the 12 months. During the following eight months the value of building authorized showed successive contractions. During 1922 the largest aggregate (\$19,312,716) was recorded in May.

Building activities by types of buildings.

Reports as to the number and value of permits for houses, other buildings and engineering contracts were furnished by a number of cities. Forty-four centres made returns showing that they had issued permits for some 12,900 dwellings, valued at approximately \$56,906,000; this would indicate an average estimated cost of about \$4,400 per dwelling. The number of permits issued for other buildings, including garages, stables, stores, factories, etc., was almost 22,200, valued at nearly \$52,543,000. The estimated cost of these buildings, therefore, averaged about \$2,400. In addition, permits for some 200 engineering projects at a valuation of more than \$4,500,000 were granted.

Building activities in 35 cities with comparisons from 1910.

Table II on pages 5 and 6 shows the value by provinces of building permits issued during the years 1910-1923 in the 35 cities originally used in these tabulations. In Table I these cities are marked by asterisks. The average index numbers of prices of building materials compiled by this Bureau are shown for each year since 1913 at the foot of Table II.

While the total for the 35 cities in 1923 (\$111,174,325) was 9.4 per cent lower than in 1922, it was higher than in any other year since 1913. Building during the four years 1910-1913 was on an exceptionally high level; prices then were very much lower than in recent years and the total of building permits indicated an extremely large amount of actual building. As was pointed out in the review for 1922, immigration during the period 1911-1913 was on an unusually high level and part of the enormous volume of building indicated then by building permits was necessary to meet the housing requirements of the immigrants.

Activity in the central provinces has been well maintained during the last two years; the total for Quebec in 1923 (\$35,358,863) is slightly higher than the previous high mark of the record, which occurred in 1913. Permits in that year were issued to the value of \$34,893,449. The aggregates for Ontario during 1923 and 1922 exceeded the total for any other year of the record.

The three Prairie Provinces showed a pronounced falling off in building activity as compared with earlier years. In 1923 the seven cities for which statistics are recorded in that district, issued permits to the value of \$9,383,620, while in 1910, the peak year, the authorized building was estimated at \$77,548,756. This was 88 per cent higher than in 1923. During the war, however, building was on a considerably lower level in the Prairie Provinces

than in recent years. The 1923 total exceeded that for 1915 by over six millions or about 224 per cent.

In British Columbia the value of the permits issued in 1923 was less than in 1922; this, as has already been pointed out, was due to the fact that a permit was granted in the latter year for a government pier in Vancouver at an estimated cost of \$5,000,000. The total for the year under review was \$7,678,582 as compared with \$10,026,749. This was a decline of 23 per cent. The highest total recorded in the fourteen years by the three British Columbian cities making returns was \$29,090,352 in 1912; this was greater than in 1923 by 74 per cent.

Activity in Nova Scotia attained its highest level in the period immediately succeeding the Halifax explosion of 1918. The total for that province in 1923 was smaller than in any other year of the record. The value of building authorized in New Brunswick was less than in any other post-war year.

Table I - Estimated Cost of Building Work as indicated by
the Value of Building Permits issued in 56 cities.

	1923	1922	1921	1920
P.E.I.-Charlottetown.	50,800	81,500	138,200	53,200
Nova Scotia:	739,646	2,416,024	2,807,936	4,356,286
x Halifax	373,699	1,752,632	2,199,398	3,421,379
New Glasgow	41,785	53,545	51,775	47,970
x Sydney	319,162	604,847	556,813	826,937
New Brunswick	1,049,856	2,028,229	1,508,829	2,535,623
Fredericton	305,895	283,197	234,800	2,298,650
x Moncton	385,461	1,037,942	699,520	1,201,673
x St. John	358,500	707,100	574,500	1,035,300
Quebec	35,483,853	30,330,234	28,869,803	21,801,692
x Montreal-Maison-				
neuve	27,125,863	21,132,586	21,291,273	14,067,609
x Quebec	4,786,933	5,397,566	3,695,397	2,301,480
Shawinigan Falls	124,990	124,400	266,200	141,200
x Sherbrooke	732,100	712,000	753,900	3,265,538
x Three Rivers	780,735	1,193,650	1,286,740	845,975
x Westmount	1,933,232	1,770,032	1,576,293	1,179,890
Ontario	71,378,679	78,414,474	57,378,099	56,096,010
Belleville	54,825	254,400	119,700	73,250
x Brantford	615,686	465,420	404,445	798,073
Chatham	245,807	366,317	322,555	387,034
x Fort William	1,425,130	1,446,685	893,050	1,045,160
Galt	135,631	731,707	501,771	291,760
x Guelph	571,484	964,808	433,257	494,158
x Hamilton	5,452,930	4,928,465	4,639,450	4,340,220
x Kingston	649,233	701,495	591,515	494,736
x Kitchener	1,393,892	2,461,321	932,050	1,277,595
x London	3,261,065	2,605,630	2,527,510	2,146,305
Niagara Falls	758,513	676,694	1,145,589	493,965
Oshawa	1,923,110	1,155,130	329,405	849,496
x Ottawa	3,521,817	5,021,782	2,716,409	3,305,172
Owen Sound	319,450	196,450	119,000	146,175
x Peterborough	295,798	439,154	541,754	939,700
x Port Arthur	2,640,321	1,127,429	113,509	216,350
x Stratford	509,272	700,527	276,009	440,782
x St. Catharines	806,310	1,290,576	776,360	830,632
x St. Thomas	334,239	221,964	113,640	258,821
Sarnia	291,470	880,260	1,231,337	742,265
Sault Ste. Marie	401,032	583,813	896,920	1,034,290
x Toronto	30,609,227	35,237,925	23,878,246	25,737,063
York Township	8,921,650	11,167,700	8,101,100	4,312,350
Welland	206,105	362,371	435,735	299,420
x Windsor	4,725,034	4,143,495	5,123,110	4,850,310
Woodstock	309,588	242,956	114,593	290,928
Manitoba	5,177,487	7,653,442	6,714,883	9,248,971
x Brandon	183,034	225,029	749,190	412,829
St. Boniface	510,353	552,663	385,293	465,992
x Winnipeg	4,484,100	6,875,750	5,530,400	8,370,150
Saskatchewan	2,405,976	3,982,213	3,434,681	5,281,600
x Moosejaw	289,398	379,180	500,177	1,533,195
x Regina	1,264,030	1,784,124	2,160,038	2,597,920
x Saskatoon	852,548	1,818,909	774,466	1,150,585
Alberta	2,597,987	5,723,204	4,170,446	6,451,876
x Calgary	821,840	3,102,700	2,298,800	2,206,100
x Edmonton	1,488,670	2,338,102	1,563,696	3,231,955
Lethbridge	258,570	243,695	217,760	252,090
Medicine Hat	28,907	33,700	90,190	61,731
British Columbia	11,023,262	14,351,058	9,401,056	8,414,015
Nanaimo	137,507	85,981	93,273	78,294
x New Westminster	350,848	332,050	264,870	312,109
Point Grey	2,397,750	3,364,200	3,516,800	2,192,114
Prince Rupert	97,148	314,412	620,833	405,189
South Vancouver	712,275	559,716	882,981	642,071
x Vancouver	6,277,574	8,661,695	3,045,132	3,569,666
x Victoria	1,050,160	1,033,004	977,167	1,207,572
Total-56 Cities	129,906,946	144,980,388	114,423,974	114,239,273
xTotal -35 Cities	111,174,325	122,655,581	94,508,164	100,679,839

Table II - Estimated Cost of Building Work in the years 1910-1923, by Provinces,
as indicated by Building Permits issued in 35 cities.

Province	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917
Nova Scotia (2 cities)	697,861	2,357,479	2,756,211	4,308,316	5,898,336	3,295,635	1,320,647
New Brunswick (2 cities)	743,961	1,745,042	1,274,020	2,236,973	2,674,716	498,748	870,963
Quebec (6 cities)	35,358,863	30,205,834	28,603,603	21,660,492	15,166,851	6,852,354	8,794,149
Ontario (15 cities)	57,311,438	61,796,676	43,960,394	47,175,077	40,584,834	18,477,012	17,407,571
Manitoba (2 cities)	4,667,134	7,100,779	6,329,590	3,782,979	3,046,541	2,140,672	2,392,788
Saskatchewan (3 cities)	2,405,976	3,982,213	3,434,681	5,281,600	3,694,505	2,177,290	1,294,659
Alberta (2 cities)	2,310,510	5,440,809	3,862,496	6,138,055	3,143,346	1,543,270	358,000
British Columbia (3 cities)	7,678,582	10,026,749	4,287,169	5,096,347	2,904,284	1,848,289	997,649
Total - 35 Cities	111,174,325	122,655,581	94,508,164	100,679,839	77,113,413	36,838,270	33,936,426
x Average weighted index numbers of whole-sale prices of building materials	167.0	162.2	183.2	214.9	175.8	150.5	130.7

x Average 1913 = 100.

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Table 11-- Estimated Cost of Building Work in the years 1910-1923, by provinces,
as indicated by Building Permits issued in 35 cities.

Concluded.

Province	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910
Nova Scotia (2 cities)	1,348,434	1,262,087	990,293	1,158,954	1,209,781	1,004,958	831,594
New Brunswick (2 cities)	675,980	864,339	852,655	2,882,780	639,795	645,556	469,215
Quebec (6 cities)	9,890,630	12,767,849	24,527,591	34,893,449	26,672,297	25,705,190	20,003,902
Ontario (15 cities)	20,229,574	14,353,828	38,558,430	49,474,905	50,022,468	39,669,026	33,603,188
Manitoba (2 cities)	2,752,173	1,862,455	13,240,385	19,231,259	21,760,957	19,252,082	16,034,738
Saskatchewan (3 cities)	687,170	574,987	2,783,235	13,007,665	20,947,160	12,521,629	6,240,649
Alberta (2 cities)	895,040	460,375	8,938,627	17,862,103	34,840,639	16,712,432	7,750,850
British Columbia (3 cities)	3,245,465	1,920,829	6,889,765	15,151,727	29,090,352	22,653,517	15,423,410
Total - 35 Cities	39,724,466	33,566,749	96,780,981	153,662,842	185,233,449	138,170,390	100,357,546
x Average weighted index numbers of wholesale prices of building materials	103.8	90.3	93.8	100.			

x Average 1913 = 100.

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