

A great many difficulties were encountered due to the insufficiency and inefficiency of labour, both skilled and unskilled, to the lack of materials and consequent delays in deliveries and to extremely bad weather conditions during critical stages of construction. Consequently, the program was seriously retarded, and the costs rose above carefully prepared estimates.

Although only approximately 60 p.c. of the program was completed by Dec. 31, 1945, the balance will be available by June 1, 1946.

Section 2.—Contracts Awarded and Building Permits Issued

In this Section barometric statistics are given of work actually in sight either as contracts awarded or as building permits. These figures are related to those of work performed during the year only so far as the work thus provided for is completed and duly reported in the Census of Construction. Further, values of contracts awarded, and especially of building permits, are estimates (more often underestimates) of work to be done. Obviously, these statistics and those of Section 3 cannot be expected to agree, since much work contracted for towards the end of any one year is often not commenced until the next and, especially as regards large contracts or contracts undertaken late in any year, extends into more than one year. The figures here given are, therefore, supplementary to those of Section 3 and are valuable as showing from year to year the work immediately contemplated during the period.

Construction Contracts.—The figures published by MacLean Building Reports, Limited, for construction contracts awarded during 1945 showed a total of \$409,032,700. This represented a 40 p.c. increase over 1944 and was the highest value reached since 1930. A peak of \$577,000,000 was recorded in 1929; and a depression low of \$97,000,000 in 1933. The large volume of work in 1945 was carried out despite difficulties in the supply of building materials and construction labour.

The volume of residential building, which accounted for almost one-half of the total value of all construction, showed an increase of 49.4 p.c. over 1944. This was largely in single-family dwellings, apartment construction being down \$2,570,000 or 29.1 p.c. from the previous year. It is expected that residential construction in 1946 will exceed the 1945 total as the demand for new homes has not begun to be met. At the present time, the only limiting factor in house construction is the availability of materials and labour.

Industrial construction showed an increase of 28.7 p.c. over 1944, while activities in road-building and hydro-electric projects were responsible for the rise of 53.3 p.c. in engineering construction. Business or commercial construction was up 25.8 p.c. from the 1944 total; with the exception of public building construction, every subdivision in this classification showed an increase.

The centre of construction activity in the Dominion in 1945 was Ontario with awards totalling \$151,856,000, or 37.1 p.c. of the total. Quebec followed with 29.8 p.c., and British Columbia with 9.3 p.c. The greatest percentage increases over 1944 were shown by Saskatchewan and Manitoba, amounting to 181.6 p.c. and 72.2 p.c., respectively.