

PETROLEUM PRODUCTION OF ONTARIO.

General Decrease Noticeable—Number of Wells Have Been Abandoned.

The yield of petroleum in Ontario again fell off markedly last year; indeed, the decrease in production which has been going on for a number of years has reduced the annual output to less than one-third that of 20 years ago. From the Department of Trade and Commerce, Ottawa, it is learned that the quantity of crude petroleum produced in Ontario of which returns were made for purposes of the bounty amounting to 1½ cents per gallon paid by the Dominion Government, was 11,004,357 Imperial gallons. Mr. W. J. Harvey, Supervisor of Crude Petroleum Bounties, Petrolæa, furnishes a statement of the output by districts, as follows:—

	Bbls.	Gals.
Lambton	205,456	1
Tilbury	63,057	21
Bothwell	36,998	19
Dutton	7,751	21
Onondaga (Brant Co.)	1,005	3
Leamington	141	12
Total	314,410	7

Decrease Not Confined to One Field.

The decline has not been confined to any one field, but is general, though more noticeable in the newer Tilbury and Leamington districts than in the older Lambton field. The following comparative statement of production by districts shows how the diminution in yield has been going on during the last five years:

Field	1908	1909	1910
Lambton	265,368	243,123	205,456
Tilbury and Romney	201,283	124,003	63,058
Bothwell	39,228	38,092	36,999
Leamington	9,334	5,929	141
Dutton	13,743	9,513	7,752
Thamesville			
Comber			
Onondaga (Brant Co.)			1,005
Total	528,959	420,660	314,410

In the Lambton field the production declined between 1906 and 1910 45.5 per cent.; in Tilbury-Romney the decline from the maximum output in 1907 was 84.6 per cent.; in Bothwell the drop from 1906 was 17.7 per cent.; in Leamington production has practically ceased, and in Dutton the decline was at the rate of 60 per cent. The only offset to this rapid decrease, which if continued will bring total exhaustion within sight, is the strike made last year in the Township of Onondaga, near Brantford, where oil was found in the white Medina sandstone, the yield from two wells in 1909 being 1,005 barrels. The oil is of a superior quality, and brought a price of \$1.29 per barrel at the close of the year. The average price for Petrolæa crude during the year was \$1.23 per barrel, and for Tilbury, \$1.06. On this basis, the value of the total crude production was \$368,153.

Output of Domestic Crude Inadequate.

The output of domestic crude being quite inadequate to meet the requirements of refiners, the deficiency is being made up by imports from the oil fields of the United States. The quantity of Canadian crude oil distilled in the refineries of the Province last year was 13,758,170 gallons, and of imported crude 17,227,262 gallons. In the following table are given details of the operations carried on by the oil-refining works, of which there are two, the Imperial Oil Company, Sarnia, and the Canadian Oil Companies, Limited, Petrolæa:—

Schedule.	1908	1909.	1910.
Crude produced ... Imp. gal.	18,479,547	14,723,105	11,004,357
Crude distilled ... Imp. gal.	34,675,120	35,530,918	36,171,033
Value crude produced \$	703,773	559,478	368,153
Value distilled products \$	2,347,680	2,501,384	2,511,368
Illuminating oil Imp. gal.	17,604,920	17,902,254	18,983,357
Lubricating oil "	3,384,940	3,856,778	4,469,038
Benzine and naphtha "	3,667,997	3,930,691	4,297,615
Gas, fuel oils & tar "	4,461,186	4,687,588	5,876,498
Paraffin wax, candles, lbs.	5,400,003	7,092,278	5,179,391
Workmen employed .. No.	430	436	428
Wages paid	\$ 247,829	261,014	280,485

Number of Wells Abandoned.

Mr. John Scott, Inspector of oil and gas wells, reports that during the year 1910 there were abandoned in the Petrolæa field 194 oil wells, in the Tilbury field 148, in Raleigh 8, and in Romney 5, a total of 355 wells. In addition to the foregoing there are in the Petrolæa district 649 oil wells from which the pumps have been removed (the wells not being abandoned), but which are being baled with fairly good results in many cases. No doubt some of these will be abandoned later. The repairing of defective oil wells and the proper plugging of abandoned ones have much improved the conditions in the fields of Lambton county. Many of the wells that remain are doing better and are

more satisfactory in operation. No apparent benefit has been noted to the remaining wells in the Tilbury fields. There have been no important extensions to any of the various oil fields. The total production of crude oil has decreased, chiefly owing to the failure of the new fields at Tilbury and Romney, which appear to be about pumped out, and have to date proved very disappointing.

Mr. Scott's experience leads him to the conclusion that by taking good care of the wells, and regularly adding a few new ones, the production in the older fields may be maintained.

ST. ANTHONY MINE.

The St. Anthony Mine, Sturgeon Lake, Ont., operated by the Northern Gold Reef, Limited, is making excellent progress as a gold producer. The property is being handled by a syndicate of prominent mining men. Mr. Arthur A. Cole, the well-known and conservative mining engineer of the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway, examined and reported on their property. The conclusions arrived at by Mr. Cole were as follows: "Taking into consideration the ore at present blocked out above the 100 foot level, the probability of the extension of the ore chutes both north and south on further development, the probability of a large tonnage of good ore being opened up below the 100 foot level as indicated by the development work already done below that level, and the assays of the ore in the floor of the 100 foot level drifts, and the possibility of locating pay ore in the east and west veins, I consider the St. Anthony Mine a splendid property, having excellent chances for returning large profits on careful development, and certainly fully warranting the expenditure necessary for the installation of a larger and up-to-date development plant, and the carrying out of a thorough exploration scheme as laid out by your present manager, Mr. J. C. Houston."

There will be no public offering of stock.

NEWS ITEMS.

The Royal Bank of Canada has opened a branch at Ciego de Avila, Cuba.

The capital stock of the Baie St. Paul Lumber Company, Limited, has been increased from \$175,000 to \$350,000.

That the recent fire in the Star Spring and Bed Company's premises at Montreal was of incendiary origin was evidenced by the discovery of two large cans of oil, a big bundle of straw, sulphur and wood shavings, between the laths and stairs.

Montreal will ask the legislature for amendments to the new charter, including a provision imposing a fine of \$100 for turning in a false alarm of fire, and in default six months in jail. The second offence to cost \$200 or a year in jail, and two years in the penitentiary for the third offence.

The Northern Ontario Light and Power Company, Limited, has been formed to take over the properties of the Cobalt Power Company, Limited, and its subsidiary companies, and the Cobalt Hydraulic Power Company, Limited. The company furnishes power and light in the towns of Cobalt, North Cobalt, Haileybury, New Liskeard, Cochrane, and Porcupine.

Mr. Ovila Lambert, proprietor of the old Peloquin Hotel at Back River, Que., was acquitted on a charge of inciting to arson. The principal witness was Mr. Henri Carufel, whose testimony was unreliable as after denying all the charges of arson before the fire commissioners, thus perjuring himself seven times, Carufel had come forward three months later and volunteered the statement that he was paid by Lambert to set the place afire. Judge Choquet, holding that there was no reliable testimony against Lambert, found him not guilty and acquitted him forthwith. Judge Choquet commented on the system followed by the police, whereby it was possible for the principal witness after pleading guilty to an incendiary act, practically to remain at liberty.

Mr. H. G. Dunham, secretary-treasurer of the United Shoe Machinery Company of Canada and secretary of the United Shoe Company, the American concern, was the only witness heard at the recent session of the judicial commission appointed by the government held at Montreal, his testimony bearing on the relations existing between the American and the Canadian concerns, as well as the nature of the contracts entered into by the company with merchants making use of its machines. Mr. Dunham explained that the Canadian concern was a subsidiary branch of the American company, there being five directors of the Canadian company, all of these forming part of the 21 members of the board of directors governing the business of the American company.