

including the raising of steam as well as domestic uses, and having regard also to the fact that the original abundance of wood created the habit of using it with little regard to economy,—a habit which, despite the changed conditions, still survives—it does not seem excessive to place the quantity of wood annually consumed for all purposes at $2\frac{1}{2}$ cords per head of the rural population. At this rate the consumption of an ordinary family comprising five persons would be about 12 cords a year. To supply the community at this rate would require say 2,900,000 cords of wood per annum, the cost of which, taking one quality with another, may be placed at \$1.50 per cord. Good, dry hardwood cannot be purchased anywhere now for such a price, but much of the wood burned for fuel consists of the inferior varieties, such as ash, elm, tamarack, or the branches and limbs of the more valuable kinds, and is sold at a smaller price. At \$1.50 per cord, the value of the wood burned every year would be \$4,350,000.

The imports of anthracite into Ontario during the twelve months ending 30th June 1900, (the last fiscal year in which imports were classified according to Provinces) were 1,075,441 tons, valued at \$4,406,231, and of bituminous coal for home consumption, 2,362,115 tons, worth with the duty added \$5,357,373. The quantity of coal brought from Nova Scotia in a normal year is so small as to be hardly worth taking into account, consequently the imports of anthracite and bituminous coal may be regarded as covering the total consumption. Adding then the several items together, and leaving out of consideration petroleum and natural gas, which have a restricted use for fuel, we reach the following as representing the fuel bill of the people of Ontario for a year:—

	Value.
Anthracite, 1 075,441 tons.....	\$4,406,231
Bituminous coal, 2,362,115 tons.....	5,357,373
Wood, say 2,900,000 cords.....	4,350,000
Total	\$14,113,604

The expenditure annually of so large a sum of money stamps the fuel question at once as one of the first importance, and in any circumstances it would be a proper subject of inquiry whether the sources and supply of so necessary and largely used an article could not be augmented; but there is a double motive for such inquiry when it has been brought home to us that one of the principal items on our list of fuels is but a broken reed.

The old adage of the advantage of having several strings to one's bow is applicable to this question of fuel. Those who, finding it impossible to procure coal during the present winter have had recourse to wood, have found themselves not in such bad case after all, considering the fact that their stoves, furnaces, etc., were constructed to consume coal only. If still another fuel could be added to the list, comparable in efficiency to coal or wood, the situation would be decidedly improved. If, too, the preparation of this article would create an entirely new industry of the first magnitude, employing labor and capital on a very large scale, utilizing resources now almost entirely dormant, and substituting a native product for one of foreign origin, there would seem to be every reason, both from the private and the public point of view, for welcoming the introduction of the new fuel. The peat bogs of Ontario are, it is believed, quite capable of furnishing such a fuel and sustaining such an industry.

PEAT FUEL NO NOVELTY.

Peat fuel, though new here, is no novelty in older lands. In Scotland and Ireland in the ordinary or air-dried form it has been burned for many centuries, and still in places survives the competition of coal from the English and Scottish mines. In the countries of continental Europe, especially Germany, Holland, Russia, Denmark and Sweden, there is annually a large and apparently increasing consumption of peat. In central Sweden it is said that as much as one million tons of peat are prepared and used yearly, and two million tons in the whole country. Not only is peat in demand as domestic fuel for cooking and producing warmth, but in metallurgical processes, in steel and glass furnaces, for firing locomotive boilers,