

PROSPECTUS

UNTIL the middle of the nineteenth century the chief fuel of all nations, except possibly England and a few other of the more advanced European countries, was wood, and even in these the use of coal goes back only a comparatively short time. Since then, however, the draft upon coal has been enormous, and anxiety has been aroused regarding the future supply. The marvellous increase in coal consumption is strikingly shown in the United States. In 1850 the annual production in that country was about 7,000,000 tons. In 1907 it was 480,000,000 tons. In that time the per capita consumption had increased twenty-fold. The amount mined in the last decade of the nineteenth century exceeded the total production up to that time, and the amount mined in the first decade of the twentieth century will exceed all the coal mined up to the end of the nineteenth century.

With such amazing increase in the use of coal the question of the future supply must give concern to all thoughtful men. The supply of coal is definite. It cannot be added to. Will it hold out? The importance of coal in modern civilization cannot be overestimated. The great coal producing nations are the greatest commercial nations, the United States, Great Britain, Germany, France, Austro-Hungary, Belgium, Russia, and Japan. The hives of industry and the centres of population in these countries cluster round their coal supplies.

Coal offers to mankind solar energy in its most concentrated form. Indeed modern civilization may be said to be the daughter of coal. But the supply of coal is not inexhaustible, and every ton of it taken out of the earth leaves just that much less for the future needs of the world.

It has been said that the nations that have the coal and iron will rule the world. What is the coal supply of the world? Where have the districts that do not possess coal to look for their future supply? What nations have the supply of the future? For authoritative answers to these and similar important questions recourse must be had to the forthcoming monograph on the Coal Resources of the World. Realizing its universal and vital importance, the Executive Committee of the Twelfth International Geological Congress decided to make this subject the main topic for discussion at the Congress to be held in Canada in August, 1913.