

During 1909, Ontario's mining industry grew notably. It is growing every day. Much new territory is being opened. Hence the newer districts are dotted with numerous small workings. Inspection of these is difficult, but absolutely necessary. And regular inspection of all established mines is equally essential. A toll of 49 lives is too large. The annual expenditure of a few thousand dollars in salaries for assistant-inspectors would be amply justified if but two or three lives were saved; but it is probable that the decrease in fatalities would be larger than this.

Nothing but praise is due the work being done at present. The potent truth is that there should be provision made for ten times more of it. This is not the first time, nor shall it be the last time, that we shall refer to this question. We hope that when next we touch upon it, however, it will be to congratulate the Government of Ontario on augmenting its absurdly small appropriation for the inspection of mines.

### COAL MINING IN ALBERTA DURING 1909.

Somewhat belated is the Annual Report of the Coal Mines Branch of Alberta. Nevertheless it is highly interesting.

According to figures here presented the output of coal in 1909 was 2,174,329 tons, an increase of 17.85 per cent. over 1908. This increase would have been still larger had not three-quarters of the production been shut off for three months owing to strikes.

Since 1905, Alberta's output has multiplied by three. There are now 121 operating mines, of which 32 were opened during 1909. During that year, also, eight mines were abandoned.

The quantities of lignite, bituminous, and anthracite mined during the past year were respectively, 763,673 tons; 1,197,399 tons; and 213,257 tons. The production of coke was 87,812 tons; and the production of briquettes, 89,785 tons.

The average number of persons employed underground was 3,893; whilst the average number employed overground was 1,314. The total fatalities numbered nine, two overground and seven underground. It is pleasing to note that the number of fatalities is smaller than ever before in proportion to the number of tons of coal mined. In 1908, there was one fatal accident for each quantity of 167,721 tons mined. During the past year 241,592 tons were mined for each life lost. This improvement is directly attributable to the installation of safety lamps and to the use of permitted explosives.

The Report includes a record of additions and improvements to existing plants, and brief notes regarding new ventures. It also presents a useful directory of operating companies. The concluding pages give the examination papers for managers', fire-bosses', and pit-bosses' certificates.

### EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Commonwealth of Australia is providing for a note issue of £7,000,000. Against this issue a gold reserve of 25 per cent. is to be maintained. Issues beyond the sum mentioned must carry a gold reserve of 100 per cent.

The Montreal Herald, for October 1st, contains a most readable account of the Timmins mine, Porcupine. Mr. Alex. Gray is the author.

Mr. F. A. Sundt, professor of metallurgy, University of Chile, Santiago, is the author of an exhaustive monograph on mining and metallurgy in Chile. Mining engineers who can construe Spanish will find this monograph most instructive.

Mining and Scientific Press makes the suggestion that mining engineers follow the example of doctors and develop a system of small fees for office consultations. Difficulties beset any such attempts. Yet we are persuaded that in the hands of decent professional men, some such idea could be realized. Once put into practice it would eliminate the importunate questioners who are forever seeking free advice.

In the opinion of Mr. George E. Collins, expressed in a lecture delivered at the Colorado School of Mines, the virtual abandonment of contract work in Gilpin County mining resulted in a marked decrease in the average efficiency of labour, and a corresponding increase in the cost of mining. The advance in daily wages, and the increase in cost of living, have affected mining costs relatively little.

Next year's meeting of the International Geological Congress is to be held in Canada. The Dominion Government, and the Canadian Mining Institute have joined in extending invitations. Would it not be seemly for Nova Scotia, Quebec and British Columbia to go and do likewise.

A correspondent informs us that the mineral exhibit at the St. John (N.B.), Exposition was in no sense representative. It appears that the provincial government could not see its way clear to spend a respectable amount upon the exhibit. Until this unprogressive attitude is changed, New Brunswick, despite her known mineral potentialities, will remain dormant.

Our Prince Rupert, (B.C.), exchanges show the same symptoms that broke out in Toronto papers when Cobalt was young. Shrieking brokers' advertisements of mining shares are making their appearance. We deprecate these yellow spots.

The extent to which taxation of industrial concerns is carried in Germany is indicated in a recent consular