

### Mining in the Province of Quebec in 1918.

By Theo. C. Denis.

As regards mining, the Province of Quebec is rather different from the other provinces, inasmuch that, unlike Ontario and British Columbia, its production in metalliferous ores is small and it differs from Nova Scotia and Alberta in possessing no coal mines. The backbone of Quebec mineral production are non-metallic substances—*asbestos*, *mica*, *magnesite*, *pyrites* for sulphuric acid, and a very varied assortment of structural materials. The prominent part which the latter plays in the mineral production of the province is indicated by the fact that in pre-war times (in 1913) in a total value of a little over \$13,000,000 the building materials accounted for 62 per cent., the metallic substance for 31½ per cent., only, the balance (34½ per cent.) being made up of non-metallic minerals, such as *asbestos*, *mica*, *graphite*, *magnesite*. The effect of the war on our mining industry has been most marked, for in 1917 and 1918 the above proportions were greatly altered, and they now stand about as follows: Building materials, 33 per cent.; metallic ores, 12 per cent.; non-metallic minerals, 55 per cent.; the total production of all of which amounted to \$16,266,000 in 1917.

Figures for 1918 are not yet available, but it is likely that the total value will exceed 17 million dollars.

#### Asbestos Industry is Flourishing.

The *asbestos* industry has been very active during the year, the demand having exceeded the production. At present there are practically no stocks of *asbestos* on hand. The production has been strongly stimulated by the war needs, and fortunately the cessation of hostilities is not likely to have any marked effect on the industry, as the ship construction programmes of various countries call for a large consumption of *asbestos* for a long time to come.

#### Demand for Chromite Falls Off.

The same cannot be said of *chrome* mining, which for three years past has enjoyed an unprecedented activity in the *Coleraine* district, and also at *St. Cyr*, near *Danville*. Since the signing of the armistice, the demand for *chromite* has noticeably fallen off. However, several producers have contracts to fill for some time to come at satisfactory prices, and the decrease in activity will be gradual. It is even possible that the more favorably situated deposits may continue to produce, and compete, on the American market, with *New Caledonia*, *Rhodesian* and *Cuban* ores. The figures of production for 1918 will probably fall below the previous year's, and 1917 will remain a banner year in the Canadian *chrome* industry for some years.

#### Magnesite Industry Permanently Established.

*Magnesite* mining has been very active. Two of the companies are now producing a dead-burned *magnesite* which finds a very ready market. *Cement kilns*, burning powdered coal, are used for the purpose and the results are very satisfactory. There is little doubt that this industry is permanently established.

#### Shortage of Labor Keeps Down Production of Pyrite and Copper.

The *pyrite* and *copper* ore production has been greatly handicapped by the shortage of miners. Labor, and especially efficient labor, has been very scarce throughout the year. On this account, and also owing to difficulties in getting railroad cars, the tonnage will probably show a decrease as compared with 1917.

#### A Successful Year for Quyon Molybdenite Industry.

Throughout the whole of 1917, the price of *molybdenite* was set by the Government at \$1.09 a pound, and exports to countries other than England were prohibited on account of the war needs of Great Britain. The price in the United States increased up to \$2.50. In January, 1918, the restrictions on the export of *molybdenite* were removed and for some time the producers enjoyed the wider market at better prices. The supply, however, seems to have more than met the demand, for during the latter part of the year the price in the United States fell to \$1.00 a pound. The *Quyon* mine had a very successful year and the method of concentration adopted is giving very good results. It is claimed that extraction is about 90 per cent., in concentrates containing 80 to 90 per cent. *molybdenite*.

#### Steady Production of Zinc by Zinc Co., Ltd.

*Zinc* and *lead* ore mining progressed during 1918. The mines of "Zinc Company, Limited," in *Portneuf* country, produced all year without interruption, and active development was carried on by the "Federal Zinc and Lead Company, Limited," on their properties at the head-waters of *Cascapedia* River in *Gaspe*. These deposits appear to be very promising. At present, they are handicapped by the lack of means of transportation.

#### Labor Situation Improving.

Since the middle of November the labor situation has been eased off considerably. There is no longer the great dearth of men which prevailed throughout the first ten months of the year. The mine operators have not reduced wages, but they can now to some extent choose the men and dispense with the incompetent, which they could not afford to do before. The labor employed is now much more efficient and willing than a month ago.

#### Production of Building Materials Should Be Large in 1919.

The cessation of war material manufacture will be felt on next year's production, when a decrease is to be expected. But, on the other hand, the decrease of activity in mining of war minerals will to some extent be compensated by a resumption of production of building materials, which industry has laid comparatively dormant for the last four years.

#### DOMELAKE.

Mr. Charles A. Randall has been appointed manager of the *Dome Lake* mine to succeed Mr. A. H. Brown who has resigned. A full force of men has been engaged at the property and a comprehensive plan of development has been mapped out. A winze is being sunk from the 500-foot level to a depth of 600-feet. Three shifts are working.

#### NEW MANAGER FOR DOMINION REDUCTION.

Mr. S. W. Cohen has been appointed general manager of the *Dominion Reduction* company at *Cobalt*, to succeed Mr. E. M. Steindler who died in *New York* recently. Mr. Cohen visited the property in *Cobalt* early in the month, accompanied by Mr. D. M. Steindler, president of the *Dominion Reduction*. Mr. Cohen was at one time general manager of the *Crown Reserve* and *Porcupine Crown Mines*, and is well known in *Northern Ontario*.