

The agitation for good roads in the Yukon should bring relief to many operators. It may be noted, incidentally, that rapid time has already been made in a motor-car between Whitehorse and Yukon Crossing.

In Southern Yukon preparations are being made to provide for the shipment of large quantities of copper ore from Whitehorse to Skagway, thence to the Tacoma smelter. Iniquitously high railroad freights have heretofore paralyzed this enterprise. The action of the Railway Commission in cutting down these rates has relieved an intolerable situation.

Coal-mining has been active. As it reflects directly the condition of the dredging industry, it will almost certainly prosper.

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The conviction that the Yukon is no longer a poor man's country may require qualifying. Whilst there is no questioning the fact that the greater part of the country's annual wealth will be won by large and highly organized corporations, yet we are inclined to believe that the enterprising prospector still has a good chance to attain success. The Yukon is fast becoming a stronger factor in our national economy. There will be prizes for more than a few in the successful exploitation of so vast a region.

THE IRON ORE RESOURCES OF THE WORLD.

The eleventh International Geological Congress assumed the task of estimating the present developed and partly developed iron ore resources known to-day. The total aggregate weight of iron ore is estimated by that body as being 22,408,000,000 tons. This quantity is calculated to represent 10,192,000,000 tons of iron.

Despite the magnitude of these figures, it appears to be a fact that at the present rate of output this supply would last for less than two centuries. The present rate of output, of course, will increase almost geometrically, the demand for iron and steel products being a function of our civilization. Therefore the visible supplies of iron ore are all too meagre to meet the requirements of future generations. One evidence of this is the enormous consumption of structural steel in large buildings. Another is the fact that our mercantile marine is almost altogether built of steel.

The total iron ore output of the world in 1908 was 113,000,000 tons. The figure for 1909 was probably much larger, and the returns for 1910 will indicate a corresponding increase. Meanwhile it is interesting to note that the actual resources of the United States are estimated at four and one-half billion tons, those of Germany being calculated at 3,877,000,000 tons. The United States possible yield of metallic iron is calculated at 2,305,000,000 tons; while the German yield is only 1,360,000,000 tons of iron in an almost equivalent amount of ore. Other countries fall far behind the United States and Germany in undeveloped resources; but the United Kingdom is the principal other contributor to the reserves mentioned.

Any estimate of this kind must naturally be based upon scanty knowledge of the undeveloped resources of this continent. There is little room to doubt that we have large unimproved iron deposits. There is even less room to doubt that we have not spent a fraction of the money necessary to develop them. If we take the Lake Superior country as a criterion, then we must spend at least ten to twenty times more in prospecting than we have done. If we do this we have some hope of success. If not, we are immediately relegated to the blank background of failure.

SCOTTISH MINERAL OIL DURING 1910.

In view of probable future developments in New Brunswick, a glance at the present status of the Scottish shale-oil industry is timely. The long and successful struggle of the Scottish operators against the Standard Oil Company, a struggle of pygmies against a titan, strengthened and consolidated the former.

In earlier years the Scottish producers depended solely upon the sale of burning oil. During their fight with the Standard people, the production and marketing of vastly more valuable by-products developed rapidly.

At present the Scottish companies produce about 22,000,000 gallons of lamp oil per annum. In disposing of this large quantity there is, apparently, little difficulty. Of course the price per gallon is exceedingly low. But the strong demand for by-products compensates for this fact. And, although paraffin is being used less and less as an illuminant, as a fuel its use is growing consistently.

Amongst the important by-products, paraffin wax has suffered from competition with the American and Galician products. So also have lubricating oil and gas oil. But sulphate of ammonia, naphtha, and motor spirits have been sources of great profit. The first mentioned by-product, sulphate of ammonia, is produced to the extent of 70,000 tons per annum. When the price per ton exceeds \$65, the margin of profit is substantial.

As several of the oil-shale companies pay fifty per cent. annual dividends, and others yield returns almost as large, it will be admitted that the position of the industry is strong. However, there have been numerous failures, and the success of the industry generally is directly attributable to most careful methods, constant search for new markets, and high moral courage.

We believe that the oil-shale deposits of Eastern Canada can be worked successfully. A longer period of probation may be necessary. But in situation, extent, and richness, our own deposits have many marked advantages over those of Scotland.

The tin market stands at about £180. This in itself is a very encouraging feature. But as the visible supply of tin is diminishing, there is room for the Canadian prospector to be almost unduly encouraged. Tin is really worth more than gold if you find it in sufficient quantities.