NEW BRUNSWICK'S FUEL POSSIBILITIES

Extensive Peat Bogs — Natural Gas, Crude Oil and Hardwood Areas Add to Resources

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The war has awakened the world from many of its fool dreams. Canada has shared in this rude awakening. It has jarred her complacency not a little to learn that there is a limit to the supply of United States anthracite coal that she can obtain and that, if she would keep from heatless days hereafter, she must depend to a greater extent upon her own fuel resources. The Dominion is not without an abundance of such resources, but, like the man power of the country, they require to be enlisted and mobilized and made available for use; and this will take time.

For example, New Brunswick has quite large deposits of bituminous coal and there is a considerable portion of the carboniferous region of the province that is yet unexplored. This coal field has not been developed to the extent it might because householders preferred to use the American anthracite, but with that source of supply shut off they would be compelled to give consideration to the native article. New Brunswick, it is estimated, has about 151,000,000 metric tons of coal in her known fields. In 1916, the coal output of New Brunswick was placed at 137,058 tons, valued at $367,041. With the preparations for increased production that are being made in the Minto and Salmon River coal fields it is likely that the output will be more than doubled this year. The Minto coal has been largely used by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company on their locomotives, and it has also been utilized for steam furnaces,

Hardwood and Natural Gas.

Hardwood offers another source of fuel supply. There are extensive stands of hardwood throughout this province that can be drawn upon. Of late years these hardwood areas have been little used for fuel, their owners finding it more remunerative to cut pulp wood for the United States market and to heat their homes with United States hard coal. If the fuel controller had got busy in time he might have secured quite a large cutting of hardwood fuel this winter by insisting that pulp wood cutters should get out an equal quantity of hardwood with the raw pulp material.

Natural gas and crude oil open up great fuel possibilities. There has been an extensive development in this respect in Albert and Westmoreland counties, but there are many parts of these counties that have not been prospected and that are believed to possess oil shales. In 1916, New Brunswick produced 610,118 thousand cubic feet of gas, valued at $79,628. Its production of crude oil in the same year was 1,345 barrels. Moncton and the territory adjoining are extensive users of this natural gas and oil. Their use could doubtless be extended.

Peat Prospective Fuel.

Peat is another prospective fuel that New Brunswick possesses. Not much study has been given to its possibilities hitherto, about the only development that has taken place being the manufacture of the moss for bedding, upholstering and packing purposes. Even in these respects the development, so far as this province is concerned, did not get beyond the experimental stage.

The late Prof. L. W. Bailey, to whom New Brunswick is indebted for a great deal of information bearing upon its natural resources of mine and forest, in a report published in 1899, says that peat bogs are of common occurrence in New Brunswick and in several places cover large areas. The regions in which they are especially noticeable are the southern portion of Charlotte County, the adjoining portions of St. John County and the district bordering the Gulf of St. Lawrence. They have been made a subject of survey and study by Mr. R. Chalmers and Prof. W. F. Ganong.

A resource map in the Bailey report fixes the location of peat at Musquash, Lepreaux, Pennfield, Richibucto, Tabusintac, Tracadie, Kingston (Kent County), Loggieville, Escuminac, Miscou Island and other North Shore points.

Professor Ganong remarks that there are some 24 peat bogs of fair size scattered from Beaver Harbor to Spruce Lake. The area of the Spruce Lake bog, says the Bailey report, is from 350 to 400 acres, while the depth is sometimes more than 24 feet. The peat moss from these bogs is said to be germicidal and may be used in hospitals. It is also adaptable for packing and bedding materials. The true peat at Spruce Lake forms a layer on the bottom two or three feet thick. The area of the Lepreaux bog is from 300 to 350 acres; of the Seely Cove bog, 250 acres.

Notes Concerning Bogs.

From Mr. Chalmers' report the following notes are taken concerning other bogs in New Brunswick:—

A large peat bog occurs on Miscou Island, covering fully half the entire island. A peat bog, about three miles long and a mile and a half wide, was seen on the east side of Shippegan Island. In the bank the peat is ten feet thick. The neck of land between St. Simon Inlet and Pokemouche Harbor is formed of peat. South of Tracadie River, near Point Barreau, a peat bog borders a lake. An extensive bog occurs on the west side of the mouth of the Tabusintac River, length about three miles, width two miles. On the east side of Point Cheval a bog was seen. A large and interesting peat bog was observed at Point Escuminac, covering an area of six or seven square miles. An extensive peat bog lies on the north side of Kouchibouguac Harbor. Another occurs on the coast about a mile south of the mouth of Kouchibouguacis River, facing the sea. A third occupies part of the peninsula between the estuary of Aldouane and the coast of Northumberland Strait. This bog is large. Two large bogs occur along the Kent Northern Railway, from one to five miles above Kingston.

Mr. Chalmers adds that should peat ever be required for fuel or for any other purpose, there is an almost inexhaustible supply.

Large Amount of Fuel.

It is quite apparent from the above that if the anthracite coal fields of the United States should be closed against New Brunswick she could find a way of supplying herself with a fair measure of heat from within herself, though the home fuel might not be so comfortable or so easily manipulated as the foreign article. The situation, however, emphasizes the necessity for a careful and comprehensive study of our natural resources at the hands of competent investigators. This should be proceeded with at once.

PROPOSED BANKRUPTCY ACT

A special meeting of the Canadian Credit Men's Association was held in the Board of Trade club rooms on March 28th for the purpose of discussing a bankruptcy measure, which it is anticipated will be introduced at the present session of parliament.

The meeting was addressed by the general manager, Mr. Henry Detchon, and Mr. H. P. Grundy, K.C., of Winnipeg, who drafted the act, and submitted it to the Credit Men's Association.

The question of this act came up when the association was first formed and constantly discussed until in 1915 Sir Thomas White was approached in the matter.

In 1917 the Canadian Bar Association drafted an act which was not satisfactory. Mr. Grundy was then asked to draft an act. In September, 1917, the Credit Men's Association asked parliament to introduce the act at the session then being held, but it was held over to come up at the next session which is now being held, and it is anticipated, will go through.

Mr. Grundy based the act upon the English form, the object being to replace in one act the nine assignment acts in Canada. It is needed very much by the business men of Canada, and when passed will aid better than anything else, to build up the business morals of the country.

The customs revenue collected at the port of Montreal in the month of March, 1918, fell $424,266.27 short of the collections in March, 1917, the figures being $3,079,437.67, as against $3,503,703.94. The receipts during the fiscal year 1917-1918, which ended on March 31st, show an increase of $1,574,570.07 over the year 1916-17, totalling $36,492,578.64 and establishing a new port record.