

Saskatchewan has not been overlooked by the oil prospector. Near Fusilier, close to the Alberta line, a well has been sunk to a depth of 3,000 feet. In several other wells nearby small seepages of oil have been encountered.

And then we come to another vast virgin field—British Columbia. According to Dr. D. B. Dowling, of Edmonton, who is in charge of the geological survey in Western Canada, there are so far only a few oil seepages in British Columbia, and he is not particularly optimistic as to the prospects of finding oil in paying quantities in the newer mainland section. Quite the reverse, however, are the opinions of the men engaged in drilling wells in British Columbia. Several independent outfits have established themselves in the lower main and have been encouraged by the geological indications. Reports of the Dominion Government Geological Society show large outcrops of carbonaceous limestones, elsewhere a prolific source of oil, in the Kootenay country, and petroleum has actually been found in the neighbourhood, and verified by Dr. Selwyn as far back as 1891. The oilfields of California are not unlike the prospective fields in Kootenay, and it would lead to a boom there similar to the famous gold rush to that section in the 'sixties, following close upon the heels of the gold excitement in California.

There are many men who have faith in British Columbia as an oil producer. That portion of the province that is drained by the Peace River is at present being explored at the expense of the provincial government with a view to ascertaining the oil possibilities, and a British corporation has applied for concessions there.

Within the last few years oil has become a super-essential to modern industrial activity. This is the age of petroleum. The country that controls the most extensive petroleum reserve will be the master of the world's industry. And so to-day we

witness a gigantic scramble among the leading powers for a conspicuous place in the sun, this time represented by that familiar and all-important commodity of commerce.

As a matter of fact, is there actually a shortage? And what of the future? Last year the United States alone consumed 436,000,000 barrels of oil. Five years from now the annual consumption of that country, it is estimated, will reach 650,000,000 barrels. Why? New uses are constantly being found for petroleum products. Take the situation throughout the world and examine some of the causes. One of the consequences of the war was the dislocation of some of the largest and most productive coalfields of Europe. The mines of the United Kingdom were seriously affected, and in finding substitutes for British coal attention was necessarily first directed towards liquid fuel. Another important factor arising out of the war is the appalling destruction of animate horse power and the high cost of its maintenance due to the rising cost of feed, causing farmers and other pre-war users of horse transportation to avail themselves of internal combustion engines for traction and other purposes. In Canada and the United States the growth of motor traction on farms has been nothing short of phenomenal. The automobile is no longer taken as an indication of wealth on the part of the owner, for almost everyone nowadays seems to possess one, especially in the more prosperous sections. The savings of many families, frugal for years, have been expended during the last two or three years on cars and gasoline. To own a car has become an obsession and a hobby to be indulged in by all classes seemingly, whether the individual can really afford the luxury—sometimes the car is that—or not.

When the Earl of Curzon, speaking before Parliament, declared not long ago that the Allies floated to victory on a wave of oil chose an unusual