

THE CROWNSNEST COAL-FIELD.

(See Diagram I.)

The Crowsnest coal-field contains the most important body of coal that is being mined in the province. The coal-bearing horizon is the Kootenay formation and it occurs in synclinal form covering an area of 230 square miles surrounded by tilted lower beds. As a result of erosion the Kootenay and overlying strata form an elevated plateau-like area bordered by depressions occupied by older beds.

Most of the heavy coal seams occur in the lower 2,000 feet of the Kootenay. On Sparwood ridge, near Michel, a further thickness of 2,000 feet in the upper part of the measures contains a number of thin seams, mostly cannel or coal having a high percentage of volatile matter. The Morrissey section at the south gives a thickness of 3,700 feet of coal-bearing beds. The covering beds are mostly coarse sandstones and conglomerates and are of great thickness.

The coal content, in natural sections at a number of places, including only seams over one foot in thickness, is as follows:—
At Morrissey 23 seams give 216 feet of coal in 3,676 feet of measures.

At Fernie 23 seams give 172 feet of coal in 2,250 feet of measures.
At Sparwood 23 seams give 173 feet of coal in 2,050 feet of lower measures.

At Sparwood 24 seams give 43 feet of coal in 2,015 feet of upper measures.

The seams present in the upper measures in the Morrissey section probably thin out before reaching Fernie, but at Fernie there seems to be a possibility that there may be other, lower seams not included in the section, so that the basin appears to have a fairly constant coal content of nearly 172 feet in 23 seams, with, possibly, an additional 40 feet contained in the thin seams of the upper measures. Details of sections and a general description of the field have been given by Messrs. McEvoy and Leach, extracts of whose reports are here incorporated.