

# The Coal Situation in Canada

There is no reason to be alarmed by the present situation — U. S. production so for this year greatly exceeds that of last year — Canada's production may equal the big year of 1913

By S. J. COOK, B.A., A.I.C.

Despite much loose talk to the contrary, the Canadian coal supply situation does not appear alarming, although prices continue high, and no relief may be expected as yet.

## U. S. Production.

The production of bituminous coal in the United States during the 199 working days ending August 21, 1920, and for the corresponding periods in preceding years according to figures supplied by the United States Geological Survey was as follows (in net tons):

1917 .. . . .	352,011,000
1918 .. . . .	375,395,000
1919 .. . . .	287,270,000
1920 .. . . .	335,967,000

The year 1920, therefore, at August 21, is sixteen million tons behind 1917, and about thirty-nine and a half million tons behind 1918, but is forty-eight and two-thirds million tons ahead in 1919. In this it is pointed out that production during 1918 exceeded consumption and provided for a net addition to consumers stocks by the end of the year, of approximately 30,000,000 tons. In 1919, the condition was reversed; consumption exceeded production and there was a net draft on stocks of perhaps 40,000,000 tons for the year.

United States production of anthracite shows an output of 55,712,000 net tons for the calendar year up to August 21, 1920, compared with 52,678,000 for the same period during the preceding year.

## Coal Imported Into Canada.

During the past five years Canada has imported from the United States, bituminous coal in quantities varying from nine million tons in 1915 to seventeen and one-quarter million tons in 1918. Anthracite imports varied during the same years from four millions to five and one-third.

Central Ontario has received, up to June 30, 1920, 99 per cent. of the average amount of anthracite coal received during the same six months in the three preceding years; and 106 per cent. of the amount of anthracite received during the same period in 1919. The bituminous coal supply is not as good. Receipts this year constitute only 89 per cent. of the average amount for the same six months of the three-year period, but when taken against last year's receipts, 1920 shows an increase of 9 per cent. over 1919. Quebec has received this year 110 per cent. of the average amount of anthracite obtained during the same six months' period of three years preceding and 119 per cent. of the amount brought in during the six months of 1919. Receipts of bituminous are lower, the 1920 figures being 65 per cent. of the three-years' average, and 74 per cent. of 1919 imports.

Total coal imports for Canada show that this year's receipts of anthracite to June 30 are 101 per cent. of the three years' average, and 107 per cent. of last year's receipts during the same six months. Bituminous coal imports into Canada up to June 30 have fallen this year to 80 per cent. of the average for the same period during the three preceding years, but they still add up to 97 per cent. of the receipts during the first six months last year.

These data will serve to inform the reader that while there is undoubtedly a shortage of coal it is not such as to cause undue alarm. There seems no reason why United States production should not continue on the same scale as at pre-

sent and with the return of the United States railways to private control, transportation facilities will probably be considerably augmented so that the losses due to car shortage may be reduced, and the consequent increased distribution will make for general relief.

Canadians will never be content to be so absolutely dependent on the United States miner, and a policy looking to the better development of Canada's coal fields would be acclaimed by both miners and consumers. Co-ordination of effort with the elimination of obsolete methods and unnecessary local competition in our coal mining districts would do much towards Canada's coal problem. But governments, capitalists and miners have all much progress yet to make before the necessary spirit of unity will be found prevailing all.

## Canadian Output.

Coal mining in Canada has been subject to many vicissitudes, and yet in spite of all, the output from Canadian mines during the first three months of the present year was nearly half a million tons in excess of the output during the same three months of 1919, and if production is maintained at the same rate during the remainder of the year, the Canadian output in 1920 will exceed that of 1913, which so far holds the record at fifteen and a half million tons.

Canadian output figures are given below for the years 1913-1919 inclusive, and for the three years 1917-18-19, the output of each coal producing province is recorded. Comparative figures for the first three months of the current year and last year are also given. All quantities are given in short tons.

## Canadian Output of Coal.

1913 .. . . .	15,532,878
1914 .. . . .	13,988,743
1915 .. . . .	13,480,196
1916 .. . . .	14,815,703

	1917	1918	1919
Noval Scotia . . .	6,345,335	5,836,370	5,790,196
New Brunswick . .	189,668	266,585	166,377
Saskatchewan . . .	360,623	348,988	379,347
Alberta . . . . .	4,873,637	6,126,443	4,950,310
British Columbia . .	2,660,834	2,879,099	2,649,516
Yukon . . . . .	5,264	2,900	.....
CANADA . . . . .	14,435,361	15,460,385	13,935,745

## Three Months Jan.-Mar.

	1919	1920
Noval Scotia . . . . .	1,448,588	1,593,170
New Brunswick . . . .	52,813	32,444
Saskatchewan . . . . .	80,837	93,563
Alberta . . . . .	1,416,578	1,732,330
British Columbia . . . .	736,748	* 675,016
CANADA . . . . .	3,735,564	4,126,523

\*Incomplete.

## COAL SUPPLY BULLETIN.

### A New Service.

To meet the very evident need for data regarding output exports, imports, and movements of coal, and in order that the general public may be kept accurately informed regarding Canadian coal supply, it is proposed to issue from the Mining, Metallurgical and Chemical Division of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics a "Coal Supply Bulletin" each month, giving all the available sta-

tistics relating to the production and disposition of Canadian coal, and the importation and distribution in Canada of coal from the United States. Owing, however, to the present extremely high costs of printing, the first number of this Bulletin, which it was proposed to publish at this time, has been postponed as changes are now being made in the multigraph equipment of the Bureau, which, when completed, will permit of the printing, promptly and at greatly reduced cost of such publications as the one proposed.

## The Collection of Coal Statistics.

During the recent administration of fuel control in Canada under Mr. C. A. Macgrath, the necessity of maintaining accurate records of all data relating to coal production in this country and imports from the United States in readily available tabular form was so emphasized that the principal records inaugurated under that regime were merged with those previously compiled in the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, and when the Mining Division of the Bureau was established last year, with the writer in charge, the collection of adequate records of coal supply was one of the first matters given attention. The whole of this work is now on a permanent basis, and the several Government Departments interested are being served through the co-ordination of provincial and dominion effort made possible by the Bureau. Thus, Coal Supply Bulletin, compiled each month from the wealth of data available in the Mining, Metallurgical and Chemical Division of the Bureau, will provide a new service to the public, and will enable the Bureau to keep its many correspondents on the subject of coal, promptly and fully informed on the subject. The critical surveys made from time to time will serve to review and interpret the data recorded.

## Organization of Work.

Output and disposition of coal figures are obtained in the Bureau through the co-operative assistance of the several Provincial Departments administering the mining laws, in the coal-producing provinces. This scheme, inaugurated in January, 1920, provides for the collection of production from the mine operators by Provincial officers, thus ensuring the highest degree of reliability in the data collected. Returns are obtained in duplicate, and one copy, after vise by the Provincial officers, is forwarded to Ottawa for compilation with the data from the other Provinces, by the trained staff of the Mining Division. This plan has resulted favorably, not the least of the advantage gained going to the mine operator, who now completes one form each month, knowing that he will not be required to do the same work over several times more for other Government Departments. The present arrangements are working so smoothly and well that Coal Supply Bulletin will contain figures complete for the month preceding its date of publication.

Imports of coal into Canada, and exports therefrom, are supplied to the Bureau twice a month through the courtesy of the Department of Customs. These figures are absolutely up to date and all coal coming into Canada from the United States is shown by quantities and kinds for each port of the entry. Exports of coal produced in Canada are also shown by quantities shipped through each port of exit.

These data, with the production figures obtained through the Provinces, enable the Bureau to survey the coal situation continually, and to determine with facility when a fuel famine threatens. All the information thus collected is carefully compiled and tabulated, and digests are prepared for the various administrative offices, including more particularly the Railway Commission.

A mailing list is being prepared and those who wish to have Coal Supply Bulletin forwarded to them regularly free of charge should send in their names and postal addresses at once to the Chief of the Mining, Metallurgical and Chemical Division, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Ottawa.