

there, close to the C. P. R. The former company had not means enough to work the property to advantage. It is to be hoped that some other parties may have, for we are told that with a small outlay the present plant can raise 200 tons a day.

It is observed, properly enough, that the position of the various deposits of coal is of importance as bearing upon the future development and business prosperity of the whole region. The cheapness of working, facility of mining and transport, are points to be considered, as well as the quality and quantity of coal to be produced. We recollect seeing in a Canadian journal last month an account of the price of coal being \$8 per ton at Calgary, and this was regarded as a very serious thing; some strong statement was made, indeed, as to the possible depopulation of the place if they had to bring their coal from Lethbridge at such a price. But when the coal fields are developed that lie nearer Calgary, there will be no need to haul the "black diamonds" from Lethbridge first eastward and then westward, along two sides of a triangle, to that place, when it can be hauled directly eastward from Medicine Hat along the hypotheneuse, 120 miles less distance, or can be had (hard coal, it is true) at Banff, which is still nearer to Calgary. It is essential to the future comfort and economical living of the growing population of the North-West that attention be paid to the development of coal mines at convenient points.

A correspondent of the *Coal Trade Journal* writes under date early June, respecting coal in or near the Rocky Mountains: "Up to the present time coal mines have been opened on the line of the Canadian Pacific road, west of Winnipeg, at the following points:—Crowfoot, 765 miles west of Winnipeg; Cochrane, 862 miles west of Winnipeg; Anthracite, 917 miles west of Winnipeg; in the Rocky Mountains, and at Lethbridge, on the Northwest Coal and Navigation Co.'s railroad, about 110 miles from Dunmore. Of these, the mines at Anthracite and Lethbridge are the only ones which are being worked to any important extent at present. The Anthracite people are mining and shipping between two and three hundred tons of excellent anthracite coal per day, and expect to double their output shortly. A large percentage of this coal is shipped to San Francisco via this line and connecting steamers. At Lethbridge the daily output is about four hundred tons of bituminous coal, which finds an outlet east and west by this company's railway." The writer goes on to say that the C. P. R. buys some of the Galt coal for its engines, while the rest is sold to individual consumers between Winnipeg and the Rocky Mountains.

Of course, there is always this to be considered in developing North-Western coal properties: that the district which includes Winnipeg and the towns of eastern Manitoba has been most largely supplied hitherto by eastern coal. So long as vessels from Sandusky and Toledo, looking for return cargoes of grain, will carry Ohio coal for ballast or at a nominal rate of freight to Port Arthur, or so long as empty cars, bound to that point for grain, will make low rates

westward for coal, so long will Assiniboia mines be subject to competition. And when the Northern Pacific road is finished it will add another to the competing routes. It is well, therefore, to proceed with prudence in the development of North-West coal properties. In the not distant future, when Manitoba and the Territories "fill up" and their manufactures grow, there will be room for both western and eastern coal. Meanwhile it will be well to continue prospecting, and so ascertain the best fuel we possess, and the most appropriate points at which to concentrate its production.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, 1887.

The dedication of the report of the Department of the Interior for the year ended with October, 1887, bears the name of the Hon. Thomas White, Minister of that important department, whose recent death is so generally regretted. It is divided into six parts, which relate respectively to Dominion Lands, surveys of the same, the Geological Survey, the North-West Territories, the Half-breed Claims Commission, and the Rocky Mountains Park. A comparative statement of sales and homestead entries of lands for the year, from Winnipeg to New Westminster, compares as under with those of 1886:

	1887.	1886.
Sales of land..	114,544 acres.	133,701 acres.
Homestead en-		
tries.....	319,500 "	294,960 "
Pre-emption	87,747 "	146,480 "

There is thus an increase by 24,540 acres of the area of land homesteaded as compared with the previous year. And a reason that pre-emptions have fallen off is found in the growing conviction in the minds of settlers that 160 acres is as large a plot as the average prairie farmer can profitably work. Besides, new comers have "hastened more slowly" to select and enter homesteads before they had acquired some knowledge of the modes of agriculture proper to the country; and again, the extraordinary grain crop of 1887 necessitated the hiring by established farmers of an unusual number of employees, who became thus engaged, according to Deputy Minister Burgess, instead of taking up land for themselves.

The proportion of entries of land cancelled for non-fulfilment of conditions has undergone wonderful change of late years, as a comparative table will show:

Year.	Homesteads.	Pre-emptions.
1878	67 per cent.	48 per cent.
1880	28 " "	40 " "
1882	34 " "	29 " "
1883	18 " "	18 " "
1884	14 " "	12 " "
1885	5 " "	10 " "
1886	6-10 of 1 " "	1 of 1 " "

In 1882 and 1883, when the greatest rush to secure land took place, 2,152,000 acres were homesteaded and 1,563,000 pre-empted, while 815,000 acres were sold. No such quantities of land were obtained in any other years, but the proportions retained have been growing greater in every subsequent twelve months.

The figures for 1887 do not differ materially in this respect from those of 1886. It is interesting to learn that the proportion

of perfected settlements in our great west compares very favorably with that in some of the States in the American Union. The U. S. Land Commissioner reports that in 1885, 1886, and 1887, of the homestead entries in three States there were perfected by actual residence and cultivation:

In Colorado, only	17·8 per cent.
In Nebraska, "	40·8 "
In Kansas, "	40·0 "

While in Dakota, Kansas, and Nebraska the lands relinquished in 1887 by intending settlers equalled *one-fourth* of all the lands taken up by settlers; and of those acquired as homesteads and pre-emptions in the whole of the United States for that year 42 per cent. were given up to be cancelled.

That the head of this department and the officers under him have plenty to attend to appears from the record of letters received and sent. Ten years ago, only ten thousand letters in all were despatched and received by the department. Last year the number received was 47,845, while 60,890 were sent, equal to about 350 letters every working day. In 1886, an average of 412 was sent and received; but this unusual increase arose partly out of the settlement of the claims of volunteers to scrip and land warrants, while last year some 14,000 concerned the Geological Survey branch of departmental work.

We copy with pleasure the tribute paid by the Deputy Head to the work done by a valued former officer: "I join with the Surveyor-General in expressing regret that the last link connecting Mr. Lindsay Russell with the Department of the Interior has been severed. It would be difficult to estimate the value of the services which have been rendered to the country by Mr. Russell in his quality as a surveyor; and his resignation from membership of the board of examiners is a real loss, not only to the department, but to the profession."

It is as gratifying as it is important to read, on page XVIII. of the Report, that "the coal supplied to the C.P.R. Company at all points from Brandon westward is now exclusively the product of Canada. * * The Canadian Anthracite Company has commenced to supply its coal on the San Francisco market, where the article is in constant demand; and being nearer to the mines at Banff than to any of the anthracite coal fields of the United States, it is probable that San Francisco will henceforth depend to a large extent upon Canada for its supply of this kind of fuel." Prices of coal and cordwood are thus given, at Winnipeg:

American anthracite coal	\$10.00 per ton
Canadian (N.W.T.) do..	8.50 "
Native soft coal	7.50 "
Cordwood, on car	\$3.50 to 4.50 per cord

A settlement has been completed, within the year, with all the colonization companies except the Temperance Colonization Society, the Shell River Colonization Co., and Mr. Patrick Purcell. The first-named society has never, according to the Report, signified any desire to terminate its agreement with the Government.

—The British America Assurance Co. has declared a half-yearly dividend at the rate of seven per cent. per annum.