

It has been estimated that the known peat bogs of Canada cover approximately an extent of 36,000 square miles. This area would produce about twenty-eight billion tons of air-dried peat, which would be equal in fuel value to about fourteen billion tons of coal. The comparative fuel value of peat, coal and wood is: 1 ton of the best coal is equal to 1.8 tons of peat or 2.5 tons of wood.

The attempts made so far in Canada to manufacture a commercial peat fuel have been failures, and very little peat-fuel is at present available. The chief cause of most of these failures has been in the ignorance of the nature of peat on the part of those who have engaged in the production of peat-fuel. In several instances the bogs chosen for the work have been unsuitable for the purpose in view. A proper investigation of the bog previous to the commencement of operations was seldom made; consequently, methods entirely unsuitable for the utilization of the bog in question have been employed, and the result has been failure. These failures, involving as they did considerable loss of capital, have created a profound distrust of everything connected with peat and the utilization of peat bogs, with the result that, at the present time, the peat industry in Canada is practically dead. With a view to assisting Canadian manufacturers of peat products, a member of my staff was commissioned to proceed to Europe to investigate and report upon the peat industry in those countries in which it is in successful operation. Armed with the practical knowledge thus gained, the Mines Branch is attacking the peat problem in this country, and a systematic investigation of the Canadian bogs has already been started with a view to ascertaining the quantity and quality of peat contained in them.

Up to date about twelve bogs have been examined, mapped and reported upon. Any person desiring to start a peat plant can, upon application, have his bog investigated, and it is hoped that such failures as have been due to the choosing of bogs unsuitable for the purpose to which the product was to be applied, will, in future, be avoided.

Another object of this investigation is to protect the public, as far as possible, by preventing the expenditure of capital in the exploitation of worthless bogs.

It was conceived that the most practical manner in which to awaken public interest in the utilization of our peat resources would be the establishment of an experimental plant where peat-fuel could be manufactured on a commercial scale and by methods which have already proved successful in European practice. At such a plant, interested