

and copper, will control the destinies of the world. The present war has demonstrated this beyond any doubt, and it goes without saying that if France could once more dominate with her guns the iron ore fields of Lorraine, the war would be over in a month. Out of 28,607,000 tons of iron ore which Germany extracted from her soil in 1913, 21,135,000 tons came from the formerly French fields of Lorraine annexed in 1871. Bismarck's surveyors made a mistake in putting the boundary line about five miles east of Briery, and left France with half the iron ore fields, yet from the half she gained, Germany extracted 21,000,000 tons in 1913. France concentrated in the half remaining to her eight-tenths of her metallurgical power, and that power passed to the Germans with their conquest of north-west France in 1915.

In 1913 Germany bought from abroad 14,191,000 tons of iron ore, and this supply is practically cut off now, but, instead, she has the supplies from French Lorraine, and, with these supplies in her hands, her output of munitions can be kept up as long as she has the man power to work the mines and turn the ore into steel. What the loss of these iron ore fields and metallurgical works have meant to France may be imagined from the fact that she has been deprived of 90 per cent. of her iron ore, 68 per cent. of her coal, 66 per cent. of her pig iron, 76 per cent. of her steel and 76 per cent. of her wrought iron. Out of 127 blast furnaces working in 1913, 95 are now in the power of Germany, and had it not been for the fact that Great Britain had the courage to fall back on her long discarded deposits of low grade ore, and turn the whole nation into one huge munition plant, in addition to the millions of tons purchased from the United States and Canada, France would have been wiped off the map, and Great Britain would be in the hands of Germany today.

Do not let us therefore deceive ourselves with reference to the necessity of conserving our natural resources of coal and iron. In 1912 Sir John Thornycroft, speaking before the Dominions Royal Commission, said Great Britain imported 6,000,000 tons of iron ore per year and at the then rate of consumption, the hematite ores of Spain would not last more than 25 years. It is also estimated on the best authority that the known deposits of hematite in the United States are being seriously depleted, and will be practically exhausted in the next 25 or 30 years, and that the harder deposits of magnetite in Canada will become more valuable on that account.