

## THE EXPLOITATION OF OUR PEAT BOGS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF FUEL FOR DOMESTIC AND INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES.<sup>1</sup>

BY

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In a country such as ours, where, independently of the continually increasing amount of fuel required for industrial purposes, we are, during the long winters, dependent upon artificial heat in our homes, the item of cheap fuel becomes one of the most important factors in the prosperity of the nation. Our coal deposits are situated in the far east and west, and the long hauls to bring this fuel to the central Provinces render the price of our own coal prohibitive, and leave us dependent on outside sources for the necessary supply of fuel in these Provinces. The rapid industrial development of Canada, and increase of our population, therefore, render the intelligent exploitation of our abundant and excellent peat deposits, for fuel purposes, of supreme importance.

We can at present form no estimate of the enormous extent of our peat bogs. The 37,000 square miles already known form probably but a small fraction of the amount of this valuable fuel asset in existence in Canada.

The necessity of utilizing the peat deposits scattered throughout the more settled portions of the Provinces, has, within recent times, been appreciated, and efforts have been made by some of our enterprising citizens to establish a peat industry. Much money, thought, and energy have been spent on this problem. Many plants have been erected; but unfortunately, so far, without reaching commercial results. Only in rare instances is progress made in improvement of processes of manufacture by those who are unfamiliar with what has already been achieved, and the causes which have led to failure. This may have been one of the reasons why the efforts so far made in utilizing our peat deposits have not been attended with success. With a view to preventing

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<sup>1</sup> Reprint of presidential address delivered at the Fourth Annual Meeting of the American Peat Society: held at Ottawa, July 25, 1910.