

section of Western Ontario have taken a lead in trying to meet the present fuel exigencies. Advantage was taken of "fuelless Monday," February 11th, 1918, to hold a conference on the subject. Citizens like Mr. D. B. Detweiler, of Kitchener; Mr. C. Cook, of Brantford; Mayor Dakin and Mr. Hancock, of Galt; Mr. Weichel, of Waterloo; Mr. Hall, of Hespeller; Mr. Kelly, of Hamilton, and others, arranged for a meeting. This meeting was held in the council chamber at Galt, Ontario, and was attended by representatives of most of the surrounding cities and towns. The chairman, Mr. J. H. Hancock, who is president of the Galt Board of Trade, in calling the meeting to order, referred to the "seriousness of the fuel situation, urging the advisability of forming an organization to go carefully into the matter of solving the fuel problem, not for this year only, but also for next year, in order to prevent a recurrence of the experience we have just had."

The meeting was addressed by Mr. Arthur V. White, consulting engineer, and Mr. Clyde Leavitt, chief forester, both of the Commission of Conservation. Mr. White outlined the situation comprehensively in statements which are fully applicable to present conditions. He spoke as follows:—*

Address by Arthur V. White

"Any comments that may be made within the brief time at our disposal must largely be suggestive, and designed to permit a broad outlook upon the fuel problem.

"It is impossible to overestimate the gravity of this problem. Apart from the issues of the war as they affect the whole Empire, I believe there is nothing before the Canadian public to-day that is of such serious moment as this national fuel problem. We simply cannot live in this climate without an adequate supply of fuel. We have before us, of course, the exigency of the present winter, which will doubtless be met. "We will be able to scramble through somehow. Large sections of the United States, however, are already taking action for the winter of 1918-1919. They have evidently been advised by their own fuel administrator that they must conserve their own fuel supply for next winter. Mr. Leavitt will refer to some of the activities that are now being instituted by various portions of the States to get ready for the coming winter. Some municipalities in Canada have already begun to take action in this respect. This fuel situation as a *national problem* has only been hastened by the present war, owing largely to increased coal demands and to the depletion of the reserves. Previous to the war, it was estimated that the anthracite coal fields in the United States would provide fuel supply for about one hundred years, but, because of the increased consumption, the United States Federal Government, doubtless, in the near future, will be compelled, in the interests of its own citizens, to place much more drastic restrictions upon the export of coal than before the war. Anything done by way of practical assistance by this Convention making for the alleviation of conditions which may be looked for next winter is effort that deserves every possible support.

Possible Sources of Relief

"Outlining possible sources of relief, I would set out:—

"*First.*—The obtaining from the United States of the largest possible coal supply. What that supply will be will probably be impossible to determine until the stress of present circumstances connected with the supply

for this winter is overcome. The United States sends to Canada a considerable supply of coal—over fifty per cent. of our consumption; ninety-eight and one-half per cent. of all the oil we use comes from the United States, and the United States is helping Canada to finance. Therefore, we must be careful to maintain our good neighborly attitude towards the United States, remembering in how many ways each country is indebted to the other for material commodities. Those countries that possess coal, like Britain, the United States and Germany, have, during the last three years, recognized as never before that coal is really one of the most important products of the commerce of the nations. Germany dictates to Holland what supplies she must send over her border in exchange for coal. Switzerland has got to send to Germany 40,000,000 francs for 200,000 tons of coal per month. Great Britain requires that certain ships touching her shores for coal must bring foodstuffs. Where would Canada stand under corresponding demands?

"With respect to present allotments, we may firmly trust the efforts made by our Dominion fuel controller, Mr. C. A. Magrath. He has a good hearing in Washington, and his efforts there are held in the very best esteem. No doubt, just as soon as circumstances are fitting, he will receive some declaration from the United States authorities respecting the extent to which we may expect coal from the States for next winter. Then more definite information can be given to the public.

"*Second.*—Our fuel supplies in the east and the west. We know something about the difficulty experienced in getting coal out of the mines, due to strikes, car shortage, etc. There must be some authoritative action taken with regard to mining in the west so that there shall be a wider distribution of western coal, causing it to be distributed as far east as it is possible to convey it, in order to serve areas now supplied with coal from Pennsylvania.

"In Nova Scotia a very serious shortage of labor has already been experienced, and, owing to curtailed means of transportation, the supply of coal available from that source cannot in the near future be transported to the west.

"*Third.*—With respect to the peat: I believe as soon as the government will clearly show that peat fuel may economically be delivered from the peat beds to the consumers' cellars, there are available energetic men with private capital, if so needed, to take the matter up as a commercial proposition.

"*Fourth.*—Hydro-electric power. With respect to hydro-electric power, there is a serious shortage. There is also the fact that the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario expects to be able by about October, 1918, to deliver an extra 50,000 horse-power. This depends upon the completion of the work now in progress at Niagara Falls. The Chippawa plant under way will probably not be available for a period of at least some three years or more. In this connection an important point that has not received the emphasis to which it is entitled, is that citizens of Canada need never expect to find the solution of the heating problem through the utilization of electrical energy for *heat*. The reason is clear and may easily be understood by a few sentences. It is profitable here to make this point clear so that this source of misapprehension may be entirely removed. Now, out of one horse-power-hour of electrical energy only 2,545 heat units can be secured, while in one pound of good coal there are about 13,500 heat units. We are importing

*The addresses and other information regarding the meeting are derived from the official report.