

THE BRIQUETTING OF LIGNITES.

INTRODUCTION.

Although the fuel resources of Canada are enormous and varied, their geographical distribution is such as to leave the region between the Atlantic bituminous coal deposits and the lignite deposits of Saskatchewan destitute of all natural fuels save peat and wood.* Hence the Provinces of Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba must be supplied in large part by importations from the United States, supplemented by shipments from the Eastern and Western Canadian coal areas. High freight rates are an inevitable concomitant of this condition.

As more than half the coal used in Canada is imported from the United States, and as nearly all is used in this naturally coal-less region, our dependence upon the United States constitutes at once an industrial menace and a national problem. Fortunately this problem is capable of solution. Superabundant unutilized water powers can provide ample energy for industrial requirements in Eastern and Central Canada. Farther west the feasibility of meeting requirements in Saskatchewan and Manitoba by utilizing prepared lignites and sub-bituminous coals is the subject of this report.

Throughout the West, and especially in Saskatchewan, the domestic fuel situation is difficult. Either the householder must use the native lignite and sub-bituminous coals of the district, which would be unacceptable to the householder in the East, or he must pay even in normal times, from \$10.00 to \$15.00 a ton for anthracite coal from Pennsylvania. As a matter of fact, the westerner does use about 500,000 tons of anthracite per year in this district at a cost of about \$6,000,000.

In addition to this coal imported for household use, a large amount of the native coal is used on account of its cheapness; but as it is dirty, friable, and disintegrates rapidly, it presents no advantage for domestic purposes other than cheapness.

*Natural gas and petroleum are relatively of minor commercial importance.