

The stock on hand at the beginning of the year 1912 amounted to 33,751 tons, valued at \$1,583,076.

Uses.—A small proportion of the crude asbestos is used for making asbestos cloth and various fire-proof textiles. A much greater amount is used for covering and insulating purposes. Boards, shingles, and roofing felts for fire-proof construction, materials for electric insulation and protection from acids, and boiler and pipe coverings are the forms of manufacture in most common use. There is only one plant for the manufacture of asbestos goods in Canada, the Asbestos Manufacturing Co., at Lachine, Quebec. This plant makes shingles and other roofing materials; pipe covering, mill boards, and asbestos lumber for the Canadian and European markets. Its consumption is about 5 per cent. of the total output of the mines of Quebec. Approximately 75 per cent. of the output of these mines is exported for manufacture to the United States, and the balance to Great Britain, Germany, France, and other European countries.

Condition and Outlook for the Industry.

There has been a decrease of stock on hand during the past two years. This seems to indicate that the industry is emerging successfully from a critical condition into which it was thrown four years ago by a rapid overproduction, which resulted from some extravagant financial promotions.

The deposits are large and the principal mines seem to have almost inexhaustible reserves. Consequently the plants installed are of a durable character and around the mines substantially built towns have grown up. The labor is largely obtained in the locality. Many of the men own their houses, living conditions are favorable, and there have been no serious labor troubles in the history of the industry.

For the immediate future, or as long as mining can be done by open-cast methods, the cost will probably vary only with the nature of the ground, the depth of hoisting, and the price of labor and materials. But in methods of concentrating changes are more likely to take place. The present practice is the result of 20 years' experience, during which time many changes, and great improvements have been made. At present the practice of different mills varies considerably in details and probably also in efficiency.

The enlargement of the market for manufactured goods, which is steadily growing, depends largely on the skill and enterprise of the manufacturers and the supply of substitutes for asbestos. The constantly increasing price of lumber must improve the field for shingles and asbestos lumber, while the ingenious applications of asbestos for heat-resisting and insulating materials seem likely to give it a continued advantage over any substitutes at present known.

The absence of rival fields for so long a time is rather remarkable. Similar rocks in like associations are known in many parts of the world, yet the only sustained and growing production outside of Quebec is obtained from the Ural districts in Russia, the United States and South Africa being much smaller producers. In his report on Mining Operations in the Province of Quebec for 1912, T. C. Denis, Superintendent of Mines of Quebec, cites the following statistics for the year 1910, from the Colonial and Foreign Statistics of the Home Office, London. The quantities are given in metric tons and values in pounds sterling:

Cape Colony	1,273	£23,143
Cyprus	442	2,754
India	3	6
Rhodesia	301	3,320
Natal	2	15
Transvaal	70	2,575
Russia (approximate) ..	10,936	82,000
United States	3,350	14,036
Total outside of Quebec	16,377	£127,849
Quebec	73,124	£548,184

MINING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Nelson, B.C., Sept. 5.

As a result of representations made to him by Lorne A. Campbell, M.P.P., of Rossland, R. F. Green, M.P. for Kootenay, while at Ottawa during the recent emergency session took up with Hon. W. T. White, Minister of Finance, the question of some measure of assistance to the mining industry of this section during the present war.

In reply to Mr. Green's representations, Mr. White said that he had so many appeals for aid from various industries that it would be futile to attempt to deal with any individual or any one company. He was quite willing, however, that the arrangement which had been made with the Cobalt mine owners as to the handling of silver should be extended to British Columbia and to Kootenay in particular. Under this arrangement the Government undertook to assist in the handling of silver bullion. The Government would issue Dominion bills to banks equal to the amount of money the banks might advance to mining companies or smelters on the security of silver bullion backed by the notes of the mining or smelting companies. This, it was felt, would assist the mining companies in financing their business and continuing operations.

Mr. White also promised Mr. Green before the latter left Ottawa that he would take up with the general managers of the banks the question of the handling of lead. The Minister was very sympathetic and was very anxious to secure a solution of this problem on a business basis—the only basis upon which, of course, he would deal with it.

Commenting editorially the Nelson News says:

"The announcement that the Government is ready to assist in the handling of the silver product of this section and that the matter of dealing with the problem of marketing the lead output of the mines of the district is under consideration will be welcome news to the people of Kootenay. This, with the advance in the price of zinc, should mean an early resumption of operations of the silver-lead-zinc mines of this part of British Columbia.

"The effect of the resumption of operations generally it is not necessary to dilate upon. It will mean that to a very large extent business throughout the silver-lead-zinc mining sections of the Kootenay will be placed on as good a basis as before the outbreak of the war.

"It is to be hoped that the efforts of Mr. Lorne A. Campbell, M.P.P. for Rossland, and Mr. R. F. Green, M.P. for Kootenay, to put the mining industry back in its old position, despite the war, will be successful. And with two such men so keenly interested there can be little doubt but that this hope will not prove in vain."