CANADA'S POSITION AS TO FUEL SUPPLY

Dependent Upon the United States, But Latter Uses Nova Scotia and British Columbia Coal—Substitution of Water Power

(Special to *The Monetary Times*)

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ALTHOUGH a settlement of the coal strike in the United States has been reached, supplies are near exhaustion, and this question continues to give the Dominion government some concern. The United States has treated Canada generously, considering the near-famine conditions that have prevailed there. The lever that C. A. Magrath, fuel controller, has been using upon the American authorities is that the Atlantic and Pacific American seaboards draw large supplies from the Nova Scotia and British Columbia mines. In view of the fact that the only argument Canada has for coal is the question of reciprocity on the two coasts, the cabinet has been watching anxiously the growing restlessness among the miners of Cape Breton and Alberta and British Columbia. There is no doubt efforts were made to have them walk out in sympathy with the American miners, and information from Alberta indicated that the One Big Union was growing active again.

Efforts to Increase Supply

The annual struggle for a sufficient fuel supply is bringing home to Ottawa as never before the need for the Dominion developing sources of its own in order to make Canada independent of the United States. Several years ago, at the initiative of Hon. Arthur Meighen, minister of the interior, an organization was formed called the Dominion Power Board, which was specifically charged with investigating the question of fuel and power in Canada. Recognized engineer experts in the Dominion departments affirm that, by a proper use of her own domestic requirements, Canada may be made practically independent of imported fuel. It is felt that Manitoba and the prairies should in future not have to draw on the east for coal supplies by a proper use of the coal of Alberta and the prairie lignites. A lignite Utilization Board was established and supplied with funds by the Dominion for the purpose of developing a commercial process for carbonizing and briquetting western lignites to meet the needs of Manitoba and Western Canada. A plant is being erected at Estevan, Saskatchewan, and will be ready for operation next season.

Government investigations already indicate the possibility of producing a fuel equal to the Pennsylvania anthracite for the supply of eastern Ontario and Quebec by bringing Nova Scotia coal to Montreal by boat and there carbonizing it. It is also possible that if the valuable by-products can be recovered and marketed the cost will enable this fuel to compete successfully with the imported article. Further, the Peat Committee appointed jointly by the federal and Ontario governments has succeeded in demonstrating on a commercial scale that a peat fuel in the form of bricks suitable for domestic use and for certain power purposes, can be placed on the market at $3.50 per ton f.o.b., the peat bog at Alfred, Ont.

Use Water Power to Utmost

In addition to these government activities the power board is looking for the development of water power on an enormous scale in eastern Canada in order to supply power for industry in place of coal. The board is investigating the possibilities of the development of power along the St. Lawrence River. This is, of course, an enormous scheme, and is also international in character. The problem is a tremendous one, and its successful solution would be a triumph fit to rank with the Panama canal and other great feats of engineering. Before a solution can be reached, however, a great deal of engineering data must be secured and the obtaining of this data, together with its consideration and the necessary planning, must, of course, take considerable time. The work of gathering data has been in progress for some time, and under the auspices of the Dominion Board several federal and provincial organizations are engaged in making extensive surveys and investigations. These studies are sufficiently far advanced to justify the assurance that a preliminary scheme will be submitted for the consideration of the Dominion Power Board within a few months.

Simultaneously with the progress of the Canadian studies the international phase of the problem is under consideration, and for some time past representatives of the governments of Canada and the United States have been in consultation on the subject, and reference has been made to the International Joint Commission in regard to a joint report on the utilization of the St. Lawrence River for navigation and power.

PERSONAL NOTES

MAJOR JOHN S. LEITCH, mining broker, has reopened his office in Winnipeg, Man., after an absence of five years overseas.

MR. A. H. WALKER, general manager of the Sterling Bank of Canada, has been appointed to the directorate of that bank.

CAPT. J. C. HOGG has been appointed manager of the bond department of Messrs. Burdick Bros., and Brett, Ltd., Vancouver, B.C.

SIR JOHN EATON has been elected to the directorate of the Canadian Pacific Railway, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of the late W. D. Matthews.

MR. J. A. L. ROBINSON has been appointed to the post of district manager at Calgary, Alta., of the North American Life Assurance Company. He was formerly inspector of the company at Regina.

MR. RAYMOND F. CASTLE, who for some time has been in the bond department of Messrs. Pemberton and Son, Vancouver, B.C., has been placed in charge of the bond department in their Victoria office.

MR. D. M. CHRISTIE, formerly attached to the superintendent's office of the British Columbia department of the Bank of Montreal, has become associated with the Alexander Hamilton Institute as British Columbia representative.

MR. JAMES THOMSON, one of the oldest officials of the Hudson's Bay Company, has retired from the management of both the departments at present under his charge. Mr. Thomson is a member of the Canadian Advisory Committee.

MR. L. A. LACEY, who has been traveling auditor for the Canada Life Assurance Company for some time has been appointed supervisor of accounts at home office, Toronto, to audit branch accounts and also home office accounts and statements. Mr. A. C. Wainwright, who before leaving for overseas was chief accountant at home office, and who since his return has been joint traveling auditor, will assume the duties of traveling auditor for the company.

OBITUARY

MR. W. F. NEILSON, manager of the Lethbridge branch of the Alberta Loan and Investment Company, died in that city last week. With the exception of one year at Calgary, he had been representing the firm at Lethbridge for the past eleven years.

TRADING IN NEW VICTORY LOAN

Bonds of the 1919 Victory Loan are now being handled by dealers under an arrangement made by the special committee of the Bond Dealers' Association, as in the case of the other Victory Loans. Dealers working under this arrangement are selling at 100 and interest for both five and fifteen-year bonds. Other dealers outside of the association are, of course, not restricted as to price. It is the intention that the bonds will in due course be listed on the exchanges.