

CANADA'S MINERALS.

In view of the excellent prospects for silver production at Cobalt, and the general interest that has thus been directed that way it will not be out of place to examine the details of Canada's whole mineral production. The facts and information on the subject are set out in the 1906 Summary of the Mineral Production of Canada, issued by the Geological Survey.

First of all it will be interesting to quote the table showing the mineral production for several years back.

VALUE OF PRODUCTION.

1892.....	\$16,623,417	1899.....	\$19,584,027
1893.....	20,035,082	1900.....	64,618,268
1894.....	19,931,158	1901.....	66,339,158
1895.....	20,648,964	1902.....	63,885,999
1896.....	22,584,513	1903.....	62,609,434
1897.....	28,661,430	1904.....	60,073,897
1898.....	38,697,021	1905.....	68,574,707

The exhibit shows a very rapid increase in the ten years ended in 1901. By leaps and bounds the value of the annual output grew until at the end of the period it was no less than four times as great as it was at the beginning. From 1896 to 1900 the bulk of the increase occurred. It was very largely due to the development of the gold and silver mines of British Columbia and to the gold discoveries in the Yukon. In the last few years there has been seen the flattening out of some important British Columbia mining districts and the gradual exhaustion of the richer placer mines of the far north, so that notwithstanding that there has been a general increase in the ordinary mineral production the decrease in particular fields, principally the Yukon, has more than offset the general gain. The consequence was a fall in the value of the production from 1901 until 1905. Bottom was reached in 1904, and last year came the turn in the tide, the gain over the preceding year being 8½ millions, in spite of a decrease of \$2,172,800 in Yukon gold. The principal items contributing to the output of \$68,574,707 were:

1905.

Metallic.	Quantity	Value.	Increase.
Copper, lbs.	47,597,502	\$7,420,451	\$2,117,875
Gold, Yukon,		8,327,200	*2,172,800
" All Other.....		6,159,633	197,116
Pig Iron, Can. ore, tons.....	70,554	1,947,860	39,996
Lead, lbs.....	55,961,000	2,634,084	1,016,863
Nickel, lbs.....	18,876,315	7,550,526	3,331,373
Silver, oz.....	5,974,875	3,605,957	1,558,862
Non-Metallic.			
Asbestos, short tons.....	50,670	\$1,486,359	\$ 276,907
Coal, short tons.....	8,775,933	17,634,615	1,066,384
Petroleum, bbls.....	634,095	849,687	*86,208
Structural Materials and Clay Products.			
Cement, Portland, bbls	1,346,547	\$1,913,740	\$ 625,748
Building Material including			
Bricks.....		6,095,000	

* Decrease.

In another table is given the percentage of each item to the total production for the two years 1904 and 1905. Slightly re-arranged the table follows:

Products.	Per cent. of total mineral production of Canada.	
	1904.	1905.
Coal.....	27.62	25.77
Gold.....	27.40	21.14
Brick, Stone and Lime.....	9.67	8.62
Copper.....	8.83	10.83
Nickel.....	7.02	11.02
Silver.....	3.41	5.26
Lead.....	2.69	3.84
Cement.....	2.22	2.81
Asbestos.....	2.04	2.19
Pig Iron, Canadian Ore.....	1.68	1.53
Petroleum.....	1.56	1.24

The rise of the Sudbury and Cobalt regions is here plainly portrayed through the advanced positions taken by nickel, copper and silver. And with regard to silver it should be said, of course, that operations in Cobalt were not well under way till 1906. When the full returns for 1906 are issued it is to be expected that silver will occupy a higher place.

In the past nearly the whole of the silver produced in the Dominion has come from British Columbia. Cobalt has changed all that. The report states that British Columbia furnished 90 p.c. of the metal during 1905. "Owing, however, to the discovery and working of the exceedingly rich silver Cobalt nickel ores near the northern end of Lake Temiskaming, in Ontario, that Province has suddenly attained almost to an equality with British Columbia and between them they now furnish over 98 p.c. of the total output."

In copper British Columbia leads having contributed 80 p.c. of the total in 1904. "Increased production in Ontario and Quebec have considerably reduced the lead of the western Province."

In coal Nova Scotia has the undisputed lead, contributing 60 p.c. of the whole. British Columbia follows with 20 p.c.

It is reasonably certain that the total output for 1906 considerably exceeded that for 1905. Besides the gains at Cobalt, Sudbury and other places in Ontario and Quebec some important silver discoveries were made in the Yukon Territory. As for the future, quite reasonable expectations are held that some very valuable mineral deposits will be unearthed when the lines of the National Transcontinental Railroad are pushed through the unknown lands in the back districts of Ontario and Quebec. Perhaps these expectations are higher because it was the pushing of the Northern Ontario and Temiskaming Railway into the Northern wilds that brought to light the riches of Cobalt.