

Our Mineral Resources and the Problem of Their Proper Conservation

OUR natural resources naturally fall under five great divisions, which with the value of their output and export for the year 1913 are shown in the following table :

	Output	Exports
Agriculture (including cattle and dairy products)....	\$673,771,500*	\$194,930,254
Forests (1912).....	182,300,000	43,255,060
Mines.....	144,031,047	57,442,546
Fisheries.....	33,389,461	16,336,721
Furs.....	5,235,907

Our manufacturing industries being based on these are here omitted from consideration, as are also our water-powers.

As will be seen, our mines rank third among our natural resources in the value of their output and second in the value of their exports. All these natural resources, except the mines, can by intelligent care and conservation be made to produce a much greater annual yield than at present, while at the same time showing a steady increase in value. These resources—agriculture, forests, fisheries and the fur trade—if properly managed, may be compared to money well invested. They can be made to yield an annual return in interest while the capital remains unimpaired or even increases in value.

Conservation of Minerals The mineral resources of a country, on the other hand, are in quite a different category—they are like a sum of money or treasure hidden in the ground. It does not renew itself, and every amount abstracted leaves just so much less for future use. When in a country of great extent like Canada, the more accessible deposits become worked out, others are discovered in more remote portions of the national domain and the output is thus maintained or even increased for a series of

*This does not include cattle, no returns for these being made to the Government except in exports.