

That further expansion of coal-mining operations is intended is manifest for preparations for increasing the output of coal are already well advanced. Before briefly noticing these preparations it will probably be of interest to have presented a few figures showing the accelerating increase in coal production, especially in quite recent years. The record of coal-mining on Vancouver Island covers a period commencing in 1835. Coal was first shipped from East Kootenay (Crowsnest) mines in 1898, and from the Nicola Valley mines in 1907. Of the aggregate production of approximately 41,143,000 tons of coal (including that made into coke) during the whole period of seventy-seven years, 3,029,000 tons was the total output in fifty years, to 1885, inclusive; 21,275,000 tons in twenty years, to 1905, inclusive; and 16,859,000 tons in seven years, to 1912, inclusive. These figures are of interest as indicating the increased production of recent years—from an average of 1,062,750 tons a year during the twenty-year period above mentioned to an average of 2,408,430 tons a year during the last seven years, which is an increase of a little better than 126 per cent., and this notwithstanding that during recent years labour troubles have affected the output of the Kootenay District in particular, to an especially marked degree in 1911, in which year there was a total output of only 442,000 tons (gross), as compared with 1,365,000 tons in 1910.

In preparation for enlarging the output of coal, important developments are taking place on Vancouver Island. The Western Fuel Co. is opening a new mine, to be known as Reserve Shaft mine, situated near the mouth of Nanaimo river, on an Indian reserve distant rather more than three miles from No. 1 Shaft, Nanaimo. The Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir), Limited, is opening a new mine, No. 8, situated about a mile north of its No. 7 mine, Union colliery, Comox District. This company is also developing hydro-electric power for use at its Union colliery mines, near Cumberland. The Pacific Coast Coal Mines, I. J., besides continuing the development of its mine at Squash, in the north-eastern part of Vancouver Island, is opening a new mine to the south of Nanaimo, at a place about one mile nearer to Boat harbour, the company's shipping port for coal from its Fiddlek colliery, South Wellington. Production of coal should be commenced in 1913 at all three of the new mines above mentioned. In the Nicola Valley District progress was made at several of the smaller coal properties. Of these, the Inland Coal and Coke Co. was the only one to increase its output—from 11,000 tons in 1911 to 21,000 tons in 1912. The Diamond Vale Collieries, Ltd., suspended mining operations during the greater part of the year, following an explosion, which caused the loss of several lives; work was resumed later in the year. While the output of coal from the mines of the Nicola Valley Coal and Coke Co., the oldest company and the one operating on the largest scale in this district, was smaller than in 1911 (approximately 152,000 tons, as compared with 191,000 tons in 1911), important exploratory work was done, for in prospecting from No. 4 mine a new seam of coal was discovered and toward its development was undertaken. Much diamond-drilling was also done, and this definitely proved the continuance, over a comparatively large area, of the various seams of coal the company has opened in its several mines. High railway freight charges for transportation of coal to the larger towns are a serious drawback, preventing this company from effectively competing on a large scale with other coal-mining companies more favourably situated. Another railway is being constructed in the district, and it is hoped that this will eventually afford the much-desired relief in connection with freight charges on coal shipments. The Columbia Coal and Coke Co. continued development of its Coalmont property, in the vicinity of Tulameen river, but shipped only about 2,000 tons of coal. The Princeton Coal and Lignite Co., operating at Princeton, Similkameen,