

Editorial

TWO GEOLOGICAL REPORTS OF IMPORTANCE.

Manufacturers of clay products in search of raw materials will find much of value in the latest report on the clay and shale deposits of the Province of Quebec. This is a preliminary report, prepared by Mr. Joseph Keele, of the Geological Survey, Department of Mines, Ottawa. It covers an investigation, made in 1912 and 13, in the thickly-settled portions of the province, localities convenient as to transportation and reasonably close to markets, wherein lies the economic value of all clay and shale deposits.

The investigation has shown that there is in Quebec a lack of high-grade clays, like fireclays or pottery clays; but that there is an abundance of raw material suitable for the manufacture of rough clay products, and well situated, too, with regard to transportation. As to what the probabilities are of finding high-grade clays in the vast undeveloped portions of the province in the future, little is said, except that their value will depend primarily upon their nearness to railways, or their branches, or to water transport.

Another Geological Survey report of great value is that by Mr. D. B. Dowling on the coal fields of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Eastern British Columbia. As indicated on another page of this issue, the total estimate for this portion of the Dominion approximates 95,598 square miles of coal lands with 1,176,825,000,000 tons of coal in reserve. Approximately 70 per cent. of this is classed as sub-bituminous coal.

During the past few years the increase in population, extension of railways and introduction of manufacturing industries has developed a rapid increase in consumption, and it is not unlikely that before many years the present operating mines will be taxed to their full capacity unless many new mines are opened.

INCREASING USE OF HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER IN ONTARIO.

So rapidly have the municipalities in the Western peninsular of Ontario taken advantage of the power facilities afforded by the Hydro-Electric Power Commission for the utilization of Niagara power that the Commission has been obliged to notify its source of supply, the Ontario Power Company, to prepare for furnishing the last ten-thousand-horse-power consignment of the 100,000 h.p. contract. Sir Adam Beck, chairman of the Commission, reports that, in spite of the war, the consumption of hydro power has increased enormously, the municipalities have added to their surpluses notwithstanding the reductions in rates to consumers, and the Commission itself has come through with a fine margin. The total revenue from the 84 municipalities, railways and large users from the Niagara circuit of the Hydro-Electric system for the six months ending on May 1st is \$710,324.95. After providing some \$303,000 for the

cost of power, \$49,000 for maintenance, \$155,000 for interest, \$30,000 for operation, \$156,000 for engineering and construction, the sum of \$69,808.37 has been applied to the sinking fund and \$50,210.35 to the depreciation and reserve account.

In order now to provide for future demands, since the limit of available power under the present arrangement will shortly be reached, the engineering staff of the Commission is investigating the development at Niagara of a hydro-electric plant of its own. It is understood that the plans are being prepared for a 250,000 h.p. development. It is altogether likely that the Commission will have something definite to announce relative to this big undertaking before the summer is over. There are other sites under consideration in different parts of Ontario. One at Gravenhurst is likely to be undertaken at an early date, providing a supply of about 1,500 h.p. The plant at Eugenia Falls, of which mention has been made on numerous occasions in these pages, will shortly undergo its final test. Power lines from it are now being constructed through various municipalities and operation will be under way in the course of a month. The plant at Wasdell's Falls was placed in operation last October; it provides about 1,200 h.p. for a group of municipalities around Lake Simcoe.

According to Sir Adam, the schemes for new developments will shortly be submitted to the government with a recommendation that action be taken at once.

"The demand for municipally-owned power," he states, "is far from being on the wane. It is going to keep us jumping to keep our producing facilities up to the call for power. Towns and villages all over Ontario are demanding, rather than asking, service from the government's power scheme. They find that it is cheaper and more dependable, and of more benefit to the country at large than paying money into the private corporations."

NEW WATER LEVELS COMMISSION APPOINTED.

An Ottawa despatch states that a commission to inquire into water conditions in Montreal harbor and to report on certain suggested improvements in the harbor facilities has been appointed by the Government. It succeeds the commission which reported last session on water levels in the St. Lawrence, and will in effect continue its work, but confine the investigations to Montreal harbor. It consists of Dean Haskell, chairman; Mr. W. J. Stewart, chief hydrographer of the Marine Department, and Mr. F. W. Cowie, chief engineer of the Montreal Harbor Works.

The first commission reported on the levels of the St. Lawrence, showing how the works in the river had lowered the water therein and suggested dams at various places to remedy these conditions. Following this, the Minister of Marine considered it would be a good opportunity to investigate conditions in the Montreal harbor, the most important place on the St. Lawrence system,