

MINERAL RESOURCES

Coal Fields.—The Canadian province of Nova Scotia has the only coal yet discovered on the Atlantic seaboard of America. The coal is bituminous, of good quality, some of the seams being particularly suited for steam-making and for the manufacture of coke for blast furnace use, while others are better adapted to the production of gas. There are extensive beds of coal with seams of great thickness on both the eastern and western coasts of Cape Breton island, in the central county of Pictou, and in Cumberland county at the extreme west of the province. Mining operations are carried on in each of these sections, so that there are mines convenient not only to all parts of the province of Nova Scotia, but also to Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, while in summer shipments can be made from all the mines by way of the St. Lawrence river to the province of Quebec. Coal is believed to exist at a very great depth in Prince Edward Island, but the cost of getting at it would be so great as to make mining unprofitable in competition with the coal of Nova Scotia under present conditions.

According to geologists there are possibilities of coal discoveries in portions of nine counties of New Brunswick, viz., Gloucester, Northumberland, Westmorland, Albert, Kent, Queen's, King's, Sunbury and York, but the seams so far discovered are very thin compared with those of Nova Scotia. The coal is bituminous, being similar in quality to Nova Scotia coals, but not of as high grade as the best Nova Scotia coal. In the vicinity of Grand lake, in Queen's county and Sunbury county, coal is estimated to underlie an area of about 100 square miles. Active mining operations are being carried on by several companies near Minto. There are two seams mined, one from twenty to thirty inches, and the other from six inches to ten inches thick. In many places the two seams are only separated by about six inches of shale. Small quantities of coal are being mined in Kent county in the vicinity of Beersville. There are deposits of peat in the counties of St. John, Gloucester, Northumberland and Kent.

Geologists say that no coal will ever be found in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario, south of the Height of Land. There are possibilities of coal discoveries north of that watershed. Peat of good quality is widely distributed in both provinces. It is remarkable that, while peat has been widely used in Europe for fuel and other purposes, in Canada this natural resource is almost entirely neglected.

Quebec province can get supplies of coal in summer from Nova Scotia by the St. Lawrence river, but Ontario is dependent almost entirely on the United States for coal, as Nova Scotia coal goes no farther west than Cornwall. Some of the mine operators of Nova Scotia believe that if the Ottawa and Georgian Bay Canal were constructed and the St. Lawrence canals enlarged, they could lay down coal at all ports of Ontario bordering on the Great Lakes and Georgian bay. Coal can be carried much more economically in large ships than in small ones, and the coal boats coming from Nova Scotia to Montreal are too large to pass through the St. Lawrence canals, while the cost of transshipment to smaller boats at Montreal is too great to allow competition of Nova Scotia coal with American coal, which is mined much nearer to Ontario.