

2.—Silver.

Although no official statistics of the production of silver had been published prior to 1887, the annual reports of the operating companies showed that from 1869 to 1885 about 4,000,000 oz. of silver, with a probable value of \$4,800,000, were produced in the Port Arthur district in Ontario. From 1887 to 1893 the production ranged in value between \$300,000 and \$400,000, and was derived chiefly from Ontario and Quebec. The next three years saw a rapid increase in production, due to the development of the silver-lead deposits of British Columbia, and in 1896 a production of over \$2,000,000 was recorded. From that year until 1905 the production varied between \$2,000,000 and \$3,500,000, rising rapidly during the next 5 years to \$17,580,455 in 1910, as a result of the discovery of the rich ores of the Cobalt district. Since then there has been a falling-off in quantity, but owing to the higher price of the metal, the value of the annual production increased to a maximum of \$20,693,704 in 1918. In spite of this falling-off in output, Canada still retains its place as the third largest producer of silver in the world, ranking after Mexico and the United States.

The silver production of Canada is chiefly credited to the rich silver-cobalt ores of Northern Ontario, the copper-gold-silver and the silver-lead-zinc ores of British Columbia, and the silver-lead ores of the Yukon Territory. A certain amount also occurs with the gold ores of Northern Ontario and the nickel ores of the Sudbury district.

Ontario.—The production of silver in Ontario in 1924 was 11,272,567 fine oz., valued at \$7,527,933, as against 10,540,943 fine oz., valued at \$6,838,226, in 1923. The total for 1924 included (a) 5,577,875 oz. bullion made in the reduction works of the Cobalt district, or 49.6 p.c. of the total Ontario production, (b) 4,309,595 oz., or 38.2 p.c., recovered by the smelters of Southern Ontario, (c) 282,208 oz., or 2.4 p.c., contained in gold bullion and nuggets sold for exhibition purposes and in products from nickel refineries; the balance of 1,102,889 oz., or 9.8 p.c., was estimated as recoverable from Ontario ores, slags and matte treated in the United States and Europe. The corresponding figures for the year 1923 were (a) 6,278,759 fine oz., or 59.7 p.c., (b) 3,028,458 oz., or 28.7 p.c., (c) 205,610 oz., or 1.9 p.c., and (d) 1,028,116 oz., or 9.7 p.c. As indicated above, practically the whole of the Ontario silver production was derived from the rich silver-bearing ores of the Cobalt district, but small quantities are obtained from the products of the nickel refineries and from gold bullion.

The Cobalt camp was discovered in 1903 when the Timiskaming and Northern Ontario railway was being built from North Bay to the head of lake Timiskaming. This was at Long lake, subsequently christened "Cobalt Lake," and the surrounding area became known as the Cobalt silver camp.

From 1904 to 1911 the output of silver increased rapidly year by year. In 1911 the province of Ontario reported a production from that camp of 31,507,791 fine oz., the value of which was \$15,953,847. In 1912 the output was nearly as great, being 30,243,859 fine oz., but prices had gone up and the value was greater, namely \$17,408,935. Since that time the production has been declining, but the life of the camp has been prolonged by the finding of "blind" veins and by improvements in the methods of extraction.

The Gowganda camp, which lies about 55 miles north west of Cobalt, has been the source of much high-grade silver ore, mainly from the Miller Lake-O'Brien Mine.