

Subsection 2.—Silver.

Although no official statistics of the production of silver were 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 annual 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 five 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. The post-war depression and the decline in the value of silver caused a low value of production in 1921, but in recent years the industry has been recovering, and Canada in 1927 retained its place as the third largest producer of silver in the world, ranking after Mexico and the United States and followed fairly closely by Peru.

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 in combination with the gold ores of Northern Ontario and the nickel ores of the Sudbury district.

Ontario.—The production of silver in Ontario in 1927 was 9,307,953 fine oz., valued at \$5,246,893, practically the whole of which 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 31,507,791¹ fine oz., the value of which was \$15,953,847. In 1912 the output was nearly as great, being 30,243,859¹ 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 which have permitted the working of ores of a grade too low for profit by the former methods.

The Gowganda camp, which lies about 55 miles northwest of Cobalt, has been the source of much high-grade silver ore, mainly from the Miller Lake-O'Brien and Castle-Tretheway mines. This section has been more or less handicapped by its distance from the railway and lack of facilities for transportation. A good wagon

¹These figures are taken from reports of the Ontario Department of Mines, by which silver production, until recent years, was computed on a different basis from that used for Table 12 following.