

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 worth over \$2,000,000 was recorded. From 1896 to 1905 annual production varied in value between \$2,000,000 and \$3,500,000, rising rapidly during the next five years to 32,869,264 fine oz. valued at \$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 the industry recovered, and in 1930 production amounted to 26,443,823 fine oz.¹

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

During 1931 much interest was created by the reported discovery at Echo bay on Great Bear lake of mineral deposits in which high-grade native silver was associated with cobalt and radium-bearing ores.

Ontario.—The production of silver in Ontario in 1930 was 10,205,683 fine oz., valued at \$3,893,876, practically the whole of which was derived from the rich silver-bearing ores of the Cobalt district, but small quantities were obtained from the products of the nickel refineries and from gold bullion.

The Cobalt deposit 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 named "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 Ontario production, largely from that camp, was 30,540,754 fine oz. Since that time the production has been declining, but the life of the camp has been prolonged by the production of cobalt in conjunction with silver 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

¹Preliminary figures for 1931 are 20,557,216 fine oz. valued at \$6,140,739 compared with a production of 26,443,823 fine oz. valued at \$10,089,376 in 1930.