

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. Partly owing to the further decline in the price of silver since that time production has decreased, amounting to only 15,187,950 fine oz. in 1933.

The silver production of Canada is chiefly credited to the silver-lead-zinc ores of British Columbia, the silver-cobalt ores of northern Ontario and the silver-lead ores exported from Yukon. An appreciable 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, Manitoba and British Columbia. Thus most Canadian silver is produced in combination with other metals.

During 1931 much interest was created by the discovery at Echo bay, Great Bear lake, of mineral deposits in which high-grade native silver was associated with cobalt and radium-bearing ores. The first commercial production from this area occurred in 1932 when shipments were made to the Trail smelter in British Columbia. Production from this new camp was continued in 1933 and 1934.

Ontario.—The production of silver in Ontario in 1933 was 4,535,680 fine oz., the greater part of which was derived from the rich silver-bearing ores of the Cobalt district. Considerable quantities were also obtained from the products of the nickel refineries and from crude gold bullion. The Cobalt deposit was discovered in 1903, when the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway was being built from North Bay to the head of lake Timiskaming. Later somewhat similar deposits were discovered at Gowganda, 55 miles northwest, and at South Lorrain, 18 miles southeast of Cobalt. Owing to the depletion of the ore bodies combined with the very low price of silver, operations have been much curtailed in the Cobalt, Gowganda and South Lorrain camps.

British Columbia.—In 1926, for the first time since 1905, this province surpassed Ontario in silver production. Quantity of production in 1930 was the greatest on record and amounted to 11,825,930 fine oz., although this record was nearly equalled in 1927 with a production of 11,040,445 fine oz. Production since 1930 has steadily declined to 6,737,057 fine oz. in 1933. Small amounts are recovered from alluvial gold and crude gold bullion, but the Sullivan and Premier mines have been responsible for the greater part of the output from this province. The Sullivan, primarily noted for its lead and zinc production, is the largest producer of silver in Canada. Silver was also recovered from the copper ores and concentrates which were exported for treatment in foreign smelters and from blister copper made at the Anyox smelter.