

Subsection 2.—General Statistics of Mineral Production

Historical Statistics.—Definite records of the annual value of mineral production go back only to 1886, as given in Table 1, although actual production began with the earliest settlements. The figures given are not strictly comparable throughout the whole period, minor changes having been adopted in methods of computing both the metallic content of ores sold and the valuations of the products. Earlier methods resulted in a somewhat higher value than those now in use would have shown. However, the changes do not interfere with the general usefulness of the figures in showing the broad trends in the mineral industry.

1.—Value of Mineral Production of Canada, 1886-1941

Year	Total Value	Value per Capita	Year	Total Value	Value per Capita	Year	Total Value	Value per Capita
	\$	\$		\$	\$		\$	\$
1886.....	10,221,255	2.23	1905.....	69,078,999	11.51	1924.....	209,583,406	22.92
1887.....	10,321,331	2.23	1906.....	79,286,697	12.86	1925.....	226,583,333	24.38
1888.....	12,518,894	2.67	1907.....	86,865,202	13.55	1926.....	240,437,123	25.44
1889.....	14,013,113	2.96	1908.....	85,557,101	12.92	1927.....	247,356,695	25.67
1890.....	16,763,353	3.51	1909.....	91,831,441	13.50	1928.....	274,989,487	27.96
1891.....	18,976,616	3.93	1910.....	106,823,623	15.29	1929.....	310,850,246	31.00
1892.....	16,623,415	3.40	1911.....	103,220,994	14.32	1930.....	279,873,578	27.42
1893.....	20,035,082	4.06	1912.....	135,048,296	18.28			
1894.....	19,931,158	4.00	1913.....	145,634,812	19.08	1931 ¹	230,434,726	22.21
1895.....	20,505,917	4.08	1914.....	128,863,075	16.36	1932.....	191,228,225	18.20
1896.....	22,474,256	4.42	1915.....	137,109,171	17.18	1933.....	221,495,253	20.74
1897.....	28,485,023	5.56	1916.....	177,201,534	22.15	1934.....	278,161,590	25.67
1898.....	38,412,431	7.42	1917.....	189,646,821	23.53	1935.....	312,344,457	28.56
1899.....	49,234,005	9.41	1918.....	211,301,897	25.93	1936.....	361,919,372	32.82
1900.....	64,420,877	12.15	1919.....	176,686,390	21.26	1937.....	457,359,092	41.12
1901.....	65,797,911	12.25	1920.....	227,859,665	26.63	1938.....	441,823,237	39.42
1902.....	63,231,836	11.51	1921.....	171,923,342	19.56	1939.....	474,602,059	41.94
1903.....	61,740,513	10.90	1922.....	184,297,242	20.66	1940.....	529,825,035	46.33
1904.....	60,082,771	10.31	1923.....	214,079,331	23.76	1941 ²	560,746,875	49.10

¹ Beginning with 1931 exchange equalization of gold production is included.

² Subject to revision.

Current Production—The depression beginning in 1930 had a profound effect upon the production of minerals in Canada. The decline in general commodity prices and the increased price of gold provided a two-fold stimulus to the production of gold and, as in the 1920's, output was increased. Old properties expanded their operations and new districts and mines were discovered, developed and brought into production. Base-metal prices declined to low levels, but the improvements that low prices and competition had brought about in productive facilities during the 1920's, together with the presence in the ores of small but appreciable quantities of precious metals, enabled the producing companies to carry on. After a period of readjustment, production expanded again. However, the serious reduction in industrial and construction operations materially restricted the production of coal, non-metallics other than fuels, and the various structural minerals.

The situation, therefore, prior to the outbreak of war in 1939 was that Canada's mineral industries were in a particularly strong position so far as their ability to make a substantial contribution to the country's war effort was concerned. Such a possible contribution had two aspects, namely:—

1. The production at reasonable cost of those minerals that are essential for the manufacture of armaments, munitions and other war supplies as well as for domestic civil needs.