

Nova Scotia contributed about 39 p.c., Alberta 29 p.c., Saskatchewan almost 16 p.c., British Columbia and Yukon 10 p.c. and New Brunswick just under 7 p.c. Only Alberta among the provinces registered a decrease as compared with 1955.

The trend towards higher consumption of coal in evidence in 1955 continued throughout 1956. The 36,313,144 tons consumed in 1956 compared with 33,382,173 tons in 1955 and 32,788,268 tons in 1954. Whereas in 1954 almost 56 p.c. of the coal consumed was imported, in 1956 the percentage was over 61, made up basically of bituminous coal used in Central Canada. Coal sales made by retail fuel dealers decreased 3.4 p.c. from 1954 to 1955, and railway coal by 14.1 p.c., but coal used for industrial purposes increased by 2.8 p.c. From 1955 to 1956 retail coal sales again decreased substantially by 13.2 p.c., but railway coal increased 15.9 p.c. and industrial consumption 6.1 p.c. Thus it is becoming clear that, though sales of coal for household and commercial purposes are yielding very rapidly to competitive liquid and gaseous fuels, industrial coal consumption is beginning to show a healthy upswing. The increase in railway consumption in 1956 is accounted for by the fact that the increase in traffic has surpassed the rate of dieselization and thus has resulted in increased use of coal-burning locomotives.

The consumption of briquettes decreased from 962,000 tons in 1954 to 776,761 tons in 1955 but increased again to 879,208 tons in 1956 despite the discontinued operations of one of the producers in Western Canada. About 70 p.c. of the amount marketed (that is, about 82 p.c. of the Canadian output) was used by the railways in the western provinces mainly as locomotive fuel.

The coal industry is continuing its endeavour to not only maintain but to improve its market position by reducing costs of production and by producing not only better coal but the types and grades of coal most suited to the various consumer demands. Mechanization of underground operations has progressed especially in eastern collieries where most of the coal is now mined by mechanical miners of various types. The Dosco Miner developed by the Dominion Steel and Coal Corporation of Nova Scotia is extensively used in all their mines on longwall faces, but other machines of the ripper type suitable for room and pillar mining are also employed. Continuous mechanical mining has not yet been introduced in Western Canada, but there are several technical and engineering reasons for this, associated either with steepness of coal seam associated with friability, or with the toughness of the coal and the desire to retain a maximum of larger sizes.

The extensive use of strip mining also reduces coal costs. Strip mining is practised in all provinces except Nova Scotia, and over 36 p.c. of Canada's output is produced by this method. Practically the whole output in Saskatchewan is strip mined, over 80 p.c. in New Brunswick, about 47 p.c. in Alberta and 25 p.c. in British Columbia. On an average the output per man-day in strip mining increased from 12.5 tons in 1954 to 13.3 tons in 1956, compared with an increase of from 2.6 tons to 2.8 tons for underground. Over the period, output per man-day increased 10 p.c.

In an effort to produce better quality coals the industry continues to direct attention to the use of modern methods of beneficiation such as cleaning, drying, dust-proofing, freeze-proofing and the briquetting of fines. Additional facilities for cleaning and drying of fines have recently been installed at various collieries in both Eastern and Western Canada.

The Federal Department of Mines and Technical Surveys assists the industry by carrying out a group of research projects concerned with the beneficiation and utilization of Canadian coal. Special attention is being given to the cleaning of fines from western Canadian bituminous coals that are particularly friable, and to studying the coking properties of the coals in relation to the possible development of metallurgical industries, especially in Western Canada. The use of coal as a reductant and in the chemical industry is also being studied. In addition the Department is continuing the study of the phenomena of bump and outburst occurring in certain coal mines with the long-range objective of evaluating the causes of these phenomena so that mining at depth may be safe and economical. Detailed stratigraphic and palaeontological studies have been conducted in or near the coalfields of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to assist in the precise correlation of