

NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

struction of the Government railway from Pas to Port Nelson, and the proposed extension of the Ontario Government railway to James bay, may bring about the development of these fisheries. An investigation of the possibilities of James bay was recently made by the Fisheries Branch of the Department of Marine and Fisheries. Many kinds of food fish were found in great abundance both in the bay and the rivers flowing into it. It is interesting to note that the whitefish, commonly regarded as exclusively freshwater fish, are found in abundance in James bay. They run up the rivers to spawn. The James bay whitefish are not as large as those of the lakes, but are of good flavour.

MINERAL RESOURCES.

The mineral resources of Canada have scarcely been touched as yet. The greater part of the Dominion has never been prospected. Even in the older districts very little development work has been done. The Canadian Geological Survey and the Mines Branch of the Department of Mines have done valuable exploration work. They have a number of very capable men at work and their reports are of great value in forming an estimate of the mineral resources of the Dominion, but the country is so vast that they can thoroughly examine only small portions of it, and at best they can do little more than describe surface indications. The real value of mineral deposits can usually only be determined by costly development work, which must be left to the enterprise of capitalists. In the past, Canada has lacked capital and this has retarded the development of mineral resources. However, it has been established beyond doubt that Canada has in the province of Ontario the most valuable nickel deposits known to exist anywhere in the world; that the largest asbestos mines known are in the Canadian province of Quebec, and at present supply the greater part of the world's consumption of asbestos; that the amber mica deposits of Ontario and Quebec are very extensive, and are the only large supplies of this mineral known to exist outside Ceylon, while Canada already ranks third among the silver producing countries of the world, the output of silver for the last seven years being 209,974,624 oz., valued at \$119,093,924.

Gold.—Canada has always been a producer of gold. The smallest output in any one year since Confederation was in 1892, when the production was 43,905 oz., valued at \$907,601. The largest production in any one year was 1,350,057 oz., valued at \$27,908,153, in the year 1900, when Klondyke gold mining reached its climax. The total production of gold for the fifty years from 1867 to 1916 was 17,199,700 oz., valued at \$355,549,839. In 1916, the production was 926,963 oz., valued at \$19,162,025.

The gold-bearing rocks of Nova Scotia extend along the Atlantic coast from Canso to Yarmouth, and are estimated to cover about 3,000 square miles. Very little capital has been invested in them, but mining operations on a small scale have been steadily continued for a little over half a century, and over seventeen and a half million dollars worth of gold has been extracted, the annual average being over 18,000 oz. of gold. New Brunswick is not a producer of gold, although small quantities of gold have been found in the washings of some of the rivers.