4.—Ontario.

The mineral industry of Ontario is characterized by rapid growth, great variety of products and domination of the world's nickel and cobalt markets. In fact, Ontario now has the largest output, as well as the greatest variety of mineral products, of any of the provinces.

As the building of the Canadian Pacific led to the discovery of the vast nickel-copper deposits of the Sudbury area in 1883, so did the construction of the Timiskaming and Northern Ontario railway lead to the discovery of the world-famous silver deposits of Cobalt in 1903 and indirectly to the great gold deposits of Porcupine in 1909 and Kirkland Lake in 1911. The finding of these gold-bearing areas has made Ontario one of the great centres of the gold production of the world. Gold is now the most important mineral product of the province. During recent years showings of gold have been discovered in the Goudreau area near Michipicoten bay on lake Superior and in the Red Lake district in northwestern Ontario. These evidences of gold ores over such widely distributed areas in New Ontario offer encouraging prospects for the future of gold mining in the province.

The first discovery of silver in the Cobalt district was made in 1903, and the output of silver, commencing in 1904, increased rapidly until 1911, when 31,507,791 oz. were obtained. Since that time the production has been declining, but the life of the camp has been prolonged by the finding of "blind" veins, and especially by improvements in metallurgy, notably the "flotation" process, which turned waste dumps into valuable ore, and enabled low-grade wall rock to be profitably mined. Recently the discovery in South Lorrain, a camp which had been practically abandoned, of high-grade ore quite equal in quality to the best ever mined in Cobalt proper, has helped to maintain silver production. Another outlying camp established at a short distance from Cobalt is Gowganda.

The nickel deposits of the Sudbury district are the most important known source of nickel and supply a very large portion of the world's requirements of that metal. The deposits are so large that, in so far at least as this generation and the succeeding generation are concerned, they may be said to be inexhaustible. Ontario has produced more than 5,000,000 tons of iron ore and concentrates since 1869, the largest production being recorded in 1915, when 394,054 short tons were produced. The annual consumption of iron ore in the province averages normally about 1,000,000 short tons, but the bulk of this comes from the United States. Lead of a high grade is produced at the Kingdon mine, near Galetta.

Practically all the commercial non-metallic minerals, with the exception of coal, are produced in the province. Among them are such minerals as corundum, graphite, mica and talc, and the feldspar deposits are of exceptionally high grade.

The production of building materials is influenced by the extent of construction operations, but resources in this division are ample to meet the demand for products such as ornamental marble, limestone, granite, sand and gravel, lime, cement, brick and tile.