

by open-pit methods and is beneficiated to raise the iron content to 58 p.c. Production is now at a rate of 50,000 tons a month and known reserves are estimated at 1,700,000 tons. On Texada Island, Texada Iron Mines Limited has been conducting a drilling program on its magnetite deposits and commenced the shipment of ore in the spring of 1952. Quatsino Copper-Gold Mines Limited has been drilling its Elk River property in the Quatsino area and has disclosed proven and probable reserves estimated at 922,000 tons.

It should be noted in connection with these developments that many deposits of magnetite and a few of hematite and limonite are known in British Columbia. The deposits vary widely in size, shape and attitude and close exploration is required to determine their contained tonnage. Among the larger known occurrences are those of Zeballos River, Iron Hill and Iron River, and Texada Island, all of which are well located with respect to coal deposits, transportation and important industrial centres.

British Columbia's production of the non-metallic minerals has increased in annual value from \$13,613,972 in 1945 to \$25,178,185 in 1951, the chief minerals in order of value of output in 1951 being coal, sand and gravel, cement, sulphur (content of sulphuric acid), stone and peat moss. The chief developments in the non-metallic minerals since the War are the discovery of chrysotile asbestos in the McDame Creek area in northern British Columbia and, more recently, the discovery of natural gas with distillate in the Peace River District, this being the first commercial discovery of natural gas with oil in the Province. Cassiar Asbestos Corporation Limited was formed in 1951 to acquire the asbestos deposits and a mill is under construction for the initial production of fibre. The oil discovery was made in Pacific Allied's Fort St. John No. 1 well, five miles south of Fort St. John and the oil was reached at a depth of 5,635 ft. As a result of this discovery exploration permits for oil and gas in the Province at June 15, 1952, covered 33,601,456 acres, principally in northeastern British Columbia but also in the New Westminster, Kootenay, Cariboo and Flathead districts.

Alberta.—The discovery of crude petroleum in the Leduc field in February 1947 has proved to be the most outstanding development in Alberta's industrial history. The succession of events that followed has focussed world-wide attention on the Province's potentialities as a major source of crude oil supply. They account also for the increase in the value of Alberta's mineral production from \$51,753,237 in 1945 to a record \$173,230,766 in 1951.

Aside from the oil developments (*see pp. 524-527*) the most important development has been the disclosure of huge reserves of natural gas, most of which has been found in the course of drilling for oil. Only to a limited extent so far has natural gas been made the primary objective of exploratory work and it is generally agreed that much larger quantities remain undiscovered. Most estimates of present reserves range as high as 10,000,000,000 Mcf., though some estimates are much higher.

The question of export of natural gas from Alberta has been under consideration for several years. It involves the problem of preserving a volume of gas sufficient for Alberta's needs for an extended period of years, and of proving a reserve in excess of this amount that will be large enough to justify the expenditures necessary to construct long-distance transmission lines. Recently the Alberta Government decided against the adoption of a policy permitting the general export of gas, the basis for the decision being that sufficient reserves have not been disclosed