

three distinct areas. Two of these lie in the Lake Athabaska region in a belt that extends from the vicinity of Goldfields easterly along the north shore of the Lake and beyond to Charlebois Lake. Those near Goldfields cover an area of approximately 20 sq. miles, the other discoveries being in the vicinity of Sucker Bay, in the Middle Lake-Black Lake area, and in a fairly large area north of the east end of Black Lake to Spreckley Lake. The third area lies north of Lac La Ronge, which is linked to Prince Albert by a 175-mile gravel highway. Although Eldorado holds most of the ground being explored at present, a number of other companies are active in each of the areas. An estimated \$10,000,000 was spent in Saskatchewan in 1951 on the exploration and development of uranium deposits and indications are that expenditures in 1952 will be much higher.

The uranium developments are highlighted by the multi-million dollar construction program of the Crown-owned Eldorado Mining and Refining (1944) Limited at its Ace Property in the Goldfields area. The mill being erected is expected to enter production early in 1953 and, in addition to treating the ore from the property, is designed to serve as a custom plant for ores from other properties, one purpose of this being to encourage the development of uranium prospects. Use will be made of a new acid leaching process which gives a higher recovery and which was developed in the laboratories of the Federal Department of Mines and Technical Surveys.

Exploration for crude oil in the southern part of the Province has reached record levels and, in 1951 alone, close to \$20,000,000 was spent in the search for new sources of supply, an amount more than double that spent in 1950 on similar work. There was comparatively little activity in connection with natural gas in Saskatchewan until 1951 when four important discoveries were made in the west-central portion of the Province in the vicinities of Brock, Coleville, Dodsland and Elrose, and some wells have been added since. To encourage the search for natural gas the Provincial Government has announced that a year from the date a total of 200,000,000 Mcf. has been disclosed in these areas it will buy the production for delivery.

Saskatchewan is increasing steadily in importance as a producer of metals and minerals, the chief contributors to its mineral production being copper, zinc, gold, silver, coal, sodium sulphate, and sand and gravel. Much the greater part of its production from the value viewpoint comes from the large copper-zinc deposits of Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company Limited that straddle the Manitoba-Saskatchewan boundary. In 1951 the Company's production accounted for about 77 p.c. of the total value of Saskatchewan's mineral output which in that year reached a record \$50,907,504.

In the production of coal, the almost complete changeover during the past 15 years from underground operations to strip mining is a major development, particularly in view of the marked reduction in cost and of the close to fourfold increase in productivity per man-day. Both these factors are especially important under the competitive conditions arising from the crude oil and natural gas developments in Western Canada. In 1951 about 98 p.c. of the coal produced was from strip-mining operations. All the coal mined is lignite and most of it comes from the Estevan area in southeastern Saskatchewan. Nearly 65 p.c. of the output is shipped to Manitoba for domestic and industrial use. Recent estimates place the recoverable reserves of lignite at 12,000,000 tons.