

of producing elemental sulphur from the sulphur-rich gases of the Nickel Company's new iron-ore recovery plant at Copper Cliff, Ont. The significance of these and of other prospective developments is that within a few years Canada may become second among world producers of sulphur and will have a substantial tonnage available for export. At present Canadian industry imports about one-half of its requirements. Production of sulphur or its equivalent from all sources in Canada in 1956 was 798,520 short tons.

Potash.—It is expected that by 1959 Canada will have become a major producer of potash. The potash deposits of Saskatchewan, discovered in 1943 by Imperial Oil Limited during exploratory drilling for petroleum, have in recent years been intensively prospected by means of core-drills and are now believed to be the largest and richest in the world. In mid-1957, seventeen companies financed by capital from Canada, the United States, Germany and France, held land in the so-called potash belt, and a number are actively engaged in the exploration of their holdings. Two companies—Potash Company of America Limited and International Minerals and Chemical Corporation (Canada) Limited—are sinking shafts to the deeply buried deposits and are building large surface plants in which to prepare the potash for industrial use. The expenditure involved will be in the neighbourhood of \$30,000,000 for each company. A Canadian company—Western Potash Limited (now Continental Potash Corporation Limited)—sank a shaft near Unity, Sask., to a depth of 1,170 feet, but at present this company is inactive.

The potash deposits occur at or near the top of a vast bed of rock salt that underlies most of the Prairies. The potash is at depths of from 2,550 to 7,000 feet, but is nearest the surface (2,550 to 3,500 feet) in a belt 35 to 50 miles wide and nearly 400 miles long that extends diagonally across the Province from the Manitoba border north of Moosomin, to the Alberta border near Manito Lake. The deposits are not known to extend into Alberta but have been found in Manitoba within 15 miles of the Saskatchewan border. The predominant potash mineral is sylvite but in the vicinity of the Quill Lakes some beds of carnallite over 30 feet thick have been found. Beds of intermixed sylvite and rock salt (referred to as sylvinites) over 10 feet thick and containing the equivalent of over 25 p.c. of K_2O are common, and some beds containing the equivalent of 40 p.c. of K_2O are reported.

As a result of exploration most of the activity is now confined to two main areas. The first of these extends from west of Saskatoon to the Quill Lakes. In this area Potash Company of America Limited has its holdings and is sinking a shaft at Patience Lake 14 miles east of Saskatoon.

The second area is south of Yorkton in the eastern part of the Province. At Esterhazy in this district, International Minerals and Chemical Corporation (Canada) Limited has begun sinking a shaft to the potash deposits which here are 3,000 feet beneath the surface.

Estimates made by competent authorities of the tonnage of high-grade potash occurring in Saskatchewan have run as high as 5,000,000,000 tons. In any case it is now known that the deposits are among the largest in the world and in quality they probably surpass all others.

Asbestos.—The asbestos industry is still growing. A major expansion program which began after the end of World War II resulted in productive capacity being more than doubled. Shipments in 1956 totalled 1,014,249 tons valued at \$99,859,969—a new record in value and a near record in quantity. The Canadian asbestos industry supplies over 60 p.c. of the world's requirements of asbestos fibre. The 5,000-ton mill of Lake Asbestos of Quebec Limited under construction at Black Lake in the Eastern Townships of Quebec when placed in operation in late 1958 will add over 100,000 tons of fibre to the Canadian annual production. National Asbestos Mines, a subsidiary of National Gypsum (Canada) Limited, is constructing a mill of 3,000 tons daily capacity just east of Thetford Mines. The largest addition to milling capacity is being made by Canadian Johns-Manville Company at Asbestos, Que., where the annual capacity of its new mill, already the largest in the world, is being increased by one-third to 825,000 tons of fibre. Several other asbestos producers are building new mills with greater capacities than the mills they will replace. Promising deposits are under examination in Newfoundland, the Yukon Territory, and northern British Columbia.