Subsection 3.—Production of Metallic Minerals

The metallic minerals of greatest dollar value in Canada during 1958 were: uranium, nickel, copper, iron ore, gold, zinc, lead and silver. A striking advance was recorded by uranium which became the most valuable of Canada's metals, having moved up from sixth position in 1957. The value of uranium produced was nearly $100,000,000 higher than the value of nickel which was in second place among the metals. The changes in production and in order of importance of the principal metals during 1957 and 1958 have already been dealt with in Subsection 1, pp. 489-490. The following statistical information gives a comparison of quantity and value figures for each of the principal metals over the ten-year period, 1949-58.

Uranium.—Uranium mineralization has been found in Canada at intervals along the western and southern edges of the Canadian Shield but production is concentrated in four areas within this belt—at Great Bear Lake in the Northwest Territories, Beaverlodge in northern Saskatchewan, and Elliot Lake and Bancroft in Ontario. Although output of uranium first began in the Northwest Territories in 1942, figures were not available until 1954 because of government restrictions. However, it is since that time that the large mines and mills of Saskatchewan and Ontario have come into production. Ontario now contributes well over 75 p.c. of the total value of production, the great mines and mills of its Elliot Lake area constituting the largest uranium-producing camp in the world. At the end of 1958 the industry had in operation a total of 24 mines and 19 mills with a capacity in excess of 42,150 tons of ore a day.

7.—Production and Value of Uranium (U_3O_8), by Province, 1954-58

Year	Ontario		Saskatchewan		Alberta		Canada	
	Quantity[1]	Value	Quantity[1]	Value	Quantity[1]	Value	Quantity[1]	Value
	lb.	$	lb.	$	lb.	$	lb.	$
1954.....	—	—	..	10,981,417	..	15,486,157	..	26,467,574
1955.....	..	487,054	..	12,312,471	..	13,232,079	..	26,031,604
1956r.....	906,614	9,361,867	2,780,534	27,194,202	873,912	9,176,076	4,561,060	45,732,145
1957.....	7,970,598	82,940,763	4,462,552	44,561,832	838,264	8,801,769	13,271,414	136,304,364
1958p.....	21,403,832	221,895,356	5,869,500	58,705,000	964,000	9,628,000	28,237,332	290,228,356

[1] Figures for 1956 include radium salts, silver, cobalt and uranium oxides; figures for 1957-58 are for uranium oxide (U_3O_8).

Nickel.—The output of nickel reached a peak in 1957, both in quantity and value. The steadily upward trend throughout the postwar period was halted in 1958—a rise in world stocks bringing about a decrease in nickel prices—and curtailed production was reflected in a 26-p.c. decrease in tonnage and a 24-p.c. decrease in value. About 95 p.c. of the 1958 production shown in Table 8 came from the Sudbury area of Ontario and most of the remainder from Lynn Lake in Manitoba. A new mine at Rankin Inlet on Hudson Bay in the Northwest Territories started production in 1957 with about 1,000 tons of nickel.

Canada uses only about 4,000 tons of refined nickel annually. Exports amounted to 85,168 tons in 1958, mostly to the United States, and exports of nickel in matte, etc., amounted to 67,659 tons.