

The importance of this source of one of the three major elements in fertilizers (nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus) is recognized in the large areas leased from the Saskatchewan Government and currently under exploration, and in the number of international companies participating. In addition to the Potash Company of America Limited which has completed its installation, two other companies have shafts partly completed: International Minerals and Chemical Corporation (Canada) Limited at Esterhazy, which mine is expected to be in production during 1961 with a capacity of 400,000 tons of potash salts annually; and Continental Potash Limited which plans to resume shaft-sinking eight miles west of Unity where potash occurs at a depth of 3,450 feet. At the end of 1959, 12 other companies representing Canadian, German, French and American interests were holding potash leases in Western Canada. Activity is centred mainly in a 25-mile belt extending southeast from Yorkton in Saskatchewan to the Manitoba boundary and in a central belt extending from west of Saskatoon to the Quill Lakes.

Though world potash mining capacity exceeds present-day consumption, the use of fertilizers is growing rapidly in many areas to meet the rising demand for agricultural production. For this reason, the Saskatchewan deposits have received the serious attention of the international potash industry.

**Salt.**—The salt industry in Canada has experienced a period of remarkable expansion. Production has almost doubled since 1957 and more than tripled in the past six years. In 1959, the fifth successive record year, output climbed to an estimated 3,233,512 tons valued at \$17,462,050, increases over 1958 of 36 p.c. and 16 p.c., respectively. This growth reflects the expanding market for mined rock salt, increased exports particularly of brine, and the growth of the chemical industry.

During 1959, two new rock salt mines came into production. At Goderich, Ont., Sifto Salt Limited, a subsidiary of Dominion Tar and Chemical Co. Ltd., began mining a 45-foot bed of excellent purity salt from a deposit lying beneath Lake Huron at a depth of 1,750 feet. Reserves are estimated at 900,000,000 tons. Salt mined at Goderich will be sold in the domestic and export markets for ice control and for industrial uses. In the Maritimes where there is a large market for coarse salt for fisheries, Malagash Salt Company Limited completed a new mine at Pugwash, N.S. A mine at Malagash, operated by the same company, was closed down as Pugwash came into operation.

Salt is produced at ten other plants located in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Nova Scotia.

**Asbestos.**—Canada occupies the most prominent position in world asbestos, recovering one-half the total production. During 1959, Canadian asbestos mines increased their shipments by 13 p.c., marketing 1,042,000 tons of fibre with a value in excess of \$106,000,000.

Chrysotile, the most widely used variety of asbestos, occurs in several places in Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia and Yukon Territory. The main centre of the industry is in the Eastern Townships region of Quebec where 12 mines account for 94 p.c. of the Canadian production. Elsewhere in Canada there are two mines, one in northern Ontario and one in northern British Columbia.

During 1959, Cassiar Asbestos Corporation Limited increased the capacity of its mill in British Columbia by 50 p.c. to 1,500 tons daily. The deposit mined by Cassiar yields long and medium length of fibre characterized by a low iron content rendering it of particular interest to the electrical industry. Advocate Mines Limited continued exploration and development of a new deposit at Baie Verte on the Burlington Peninsula, Newfoundland, and a new deposit of chrysotile was discovered 30 miles south of Deception Bay in Ungava.

**Construction Materials.**—In 1959, as a result of the continued activity in building and road construction across the country, mineral raw materials were produced for construction needs at a record level, slightly above that of 1958. Producers' shipments of cement, clay products, lime, sand, gravel and stone exceeded \$314,000,000 in value.