For some time, the Laboratory has studied major plant constituents such as carbohydrates, protein, starch, lignin and fibres. An example of this work is the definition of the chemical structure of several polysaccharides found in cereal grains and important in baking, milling and fermentation technology. Attention is also being given to minor plant constituents, such as phenols, flavonoids and terpenes, which are known to have fungicidal and germicidal properties. A laboratory has been set up for the systematic study of extractives from local plants and shrubs.

Developments from the Laboratory attracting commercial interest are: the production of feed supplements by direct use of microorganisms, and specific essential amino acids such as lysine; poly-hydroxy alcohols such as glycerol and arabitol; hydroxy fatty acids; and the possibilities of producing specific glyceride types using the enzyme systems of microorganisms. The Laboratory works in co-operation with the Canada Department of Agriculture to help maintain Canada's position as the world's leading exporter of rapeseed, used to produce cooking oils, dressings and oil for use in margarine and shortening. A group working in the field of mycology is concerned with the production of new chemicals, antibiotics, alkaloids and amino acids.

Section 2.—Research in the Atomic Energy Field*

Recent Developments and Prospects.—The first major fruits of Canadian atomic energy research now appear close at hand. The Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario is constructing a multi-unit nuclear electric generating station at Pickering near Toronto. Each unit will generate 500 megawatts (1 megawatt = 1,000 kilowatts) and beginning in 1970 it is planned to bring into operation the first four units at yearly intervals. Estimates indicate that the power will be generated for less than four mills (0.4 cents) per kilowatt hour and will be competitive with that from other available types of thermal generating station. The Quebec Hydro-Electric Commission is also entering the nuclear field with a 250-megawatt prototype nuclear generating station of advanced design. Like the earlier CANDU (Canadian Deuterium Uranium) reactors, the design employs natural uranium as the fuel and heavy water as the moderator but the heat will be carried from the fuel by boiling ordinary water instead of by heavy water at a pressure sufficient to prevent boiling. The design is distinguished by the title CANDU-BLW-250 (Canadian Deuterium Uranium-Boiling Light Water-250 megawatts).

The first nuclear power demonstration (NPD) reactor, CANDU-PHW-20 (Pressurized Heavy Water-20 megawatts), at Rolphton, Ont., has shown clearly that capacity factors in excess of 80 p.c. throughout a full year can be achieved with this type of system. Fuel is routinely changed with the reactor at power and losses of heavy water are well within the economic limits. This reactor is now yielding useful information on the long-term behaviour of its components and is providing a training base for those who will staff the larger reactors now being built in Canada and abroad. The next reactor in the series is the 200-megawatt station at Douglas Point, Ont., which will be brought into operation in 1966.

Canadian heavy-water power reactors are also under construction in India and Pakistan. To meet the large demand for heavy water that these reactors necessarily entail, one plant to produce 200 tons a year is nearing completion at Glace Bay, N.S., and a site is being chosen for another that will produce 500 tons a year.

Although nuclear power is expected to restore the world market for uranium, the major build-up is expected in the 1970s. The high energy yield from the fission of uranium is the key to economic nuclear power. The yield is so high that the cost of the raw uranium is a very minor component of the cost of electric power. It is about 5 p.c. of the total and may be contrasted with 50 p.c. or more paid for coal in some large conventional generating stations. The largest component in the over-all economy of nuclear power systems is reactor plant construction and a minor (10 p.c. to 15 p.c.) component is fuel fabrication.

* Prepared (June 1966) by Dr. W. B. Lewis, Senior Vice-President (Science), Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, Chalk River, Ont.