

Undeveloped Water Power Resources.—Table 2 gives estimates of undeveloped power based on different rates of flow: the first column indicates continuous power ordinarily available during periods of low discharge under existing conditions of river flow based on Q95, which is the natural or modified flow available 95 p.c. of the time; the second column shows dependable maximum power based on Q50, which is the natural or modified flow available for at least 50 p.c. of the time; and the third column shows dependable maximum power based on Qm, the arithmetical mean flow. On rivers for which flow records are sparse or non-existent, estimates of flow are made from available information relating to run-off in the same general area. The hydraulic head used in calculating undeveloped water power is based on the actual drop or the feasible concentration of head which has been measured or carefully estimated. Preliminary figures for Quebec supplied by the provincial Department of Natural Resources, however, reflect the net river power potential which would result from development of the entire head available on Quebec rivers.

It should be emphasized that the figures of the first two columns represent only the minimum water power possibilities in Canada for the reason that the estimates are based upon existing river flow and, for the most part, do not reflect the benefits of streamflow regulation that would result from the development of storage potential. On the other hand, the arithmetical mean flow figures represent the power that would be obtainable if the entire flow in the river could be regulated to provide a continuous flow of constant magnitude. It can readily be seen that, because the latter condition assumes complete regulation, estimates of potential based upon arithmetical mean flow will, if other pertinent factors are neglected, exceed the amount of capacity that might be expected to be installed at the site, particularly where little or no storage is available. However, recent experience in the development of water power sites has indicated that, in fact, the generating capacities installed at many sites are very considerably in excess of what might be dictated by even the arithmetical mean flow. Several major river-diversion possibilities exist, particularly in British Columbia. For this reason, the estimates of potential of British Columbia's undeveloped hydro resources have recently been boosted substantially, mainly because of the inclusion of figures based upon the diversion of rivers which, if they are developed at all, will almost certainly be developed on a combined-river basis.

Developed Water Power Resources.—The figures of installed generating capacity given in Table 2 are based on the manufacturer's rating in kilowatts as shown on the generator name-plate, or derived from the rating where it is indicated in kilovolt-amperes. The maximum economic installation at a power site can be determined only by careful consideration of all the conditions and circumstances pertinent to its individual development. It is usual practice, however, to install units having a combined capacity in excess of the available continuous power at Q50, and frequently in excess of the power available at Qm. There are a number of reasons for this. The excess capacity may be installed for use at peak-load periods, to take advantage of periods of high flow, or to facilitate plant or system maintenance. In some instances, storage dams have been built subsequent to initial development to smooth out fluctuations in river flows. In other cases, deficiencies in power output during periods of low flow have been offset by auxiliary power supplied from thermal plants, or by inter-connection with other plants which operate under different load conditions or are located on rivers with different flow characteristics.

Thus, the extent to which the installed capacity exceeds the available continuous power at the various rates of flow is dependent upon the factors that govern the system of plant operation, and varies widely in different areas of the country. In some developments, the difference may amount to several hundred per cent. For this reason, discretion should be used in comparing the figures in the last column with those in the preceding columns, as available continuous power and installed capacity are not directly comparable. As a rough guide, however, it may be assumed that the power equivalent of the flow at Q50 represents an approximate, if conservative, estimate of hydro generating capacity remaining to be installed in Canada.