

from the treatment of base-metal ores. The gold is sent in the form of ingots of impure gold to the Royal Canadian Mint or to a private refinery, where it is again refined until it reaches a degree of purity as high as 99.999 per cent. It is then sold and used in various ways.

Despite price fluctuations, gold mining is still a viable undertaking. There is no longer much likelihood that world production will decline; on the contrary a slight increase is expected.

Iron ore

Iron is the main component of steel, which is the basic metal of every industrialized society. In fact, the construction, automobile and aeronautical industries alone consume 40 per cent of the steel sold on the national market. Another important segment of this market is piping, which represents 15 per cent of the demand. Also important is the manufacture of special steels, such as stainless, tool quality steel and high performance steel, used in the aerospace and armaments industries and in nuclear energy applications.

Canada is a major world producer and exporter of iron ore, ranking sixth in volume of production. The Labrador area of Newfoundland is Canada's largest source of iron ore, followed by Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia.

Iron ore is usually found near the surface, and the mines are normally open pit. The crude ore is then processed to produce an enriched concentrate containing approximately 65 per cent iron, instead of the 35 per cent normally contained in the crude ore. The Canadian steel industry usually operates at about 90 per cent of its capacity and has pioneered technologies such as the basic oxygen furnace, continuous casting and direct reduction.

One of the country's largest markets for iron ore is the steel industry, which absorbs one-quarter of the production. Of the remaining 75 per cent of the average annual production of some 45 million tonnes, approximately 33 per cent is exported to the United States, and the rest to Britain, Western Europe and Japan.

It is estimated that by 1985 Canada's yearly iron ore production will reach 60 million tonnes.

Lead

Lead has a very long life since, of all the common metals, it is the most corrosion-resistant. Its uses are many and varied. For example, it is used to manufacture lead-acid batteries and ammunition, as a construction