

already been rendered easy of access by railways and roads—is pre-eminently a land for agriculture and stock-raising, but a great area is now known to be underlain by beds of coal, or of lignite-coal, often excellent fuels and everywhere available for local use. In a report on the southern part of what is now the District of Alberta, published more than ten years ago, the amount of coal contained in one of these beds in a known outcrop of sixty-six miles in length, and at an easily workable depth, was estimated at 330,000,000 tons. The mines at Lethbridge are situated upon one part of this particular deposit. The vast extent of these coal-fields of the North-West may be further evidenced by the fact that a rough estimate of their area between the 49th and 56th parallels amounts to 50,000 square-miles, than which there is probably no larger tract in the world known to be characterized by a practically continuous spread of valuable mineral fuels.

Natural gas, in important quantity, has also been found in several borings sunk for other purposes, and although not as yet utilized, the geological conditions indicate that a practically inexhaustible reservoir of this convenient fuel extends beneath a great area of country. Remarkable outcrops of "tar-sands," or sand impregnated with bituminous matter, found along the Athabasca River, support the belief that one of the most notable petroleum-bearing territories of the world there awaits development. Impressed by its probable importance, the Government has begun experimental boring operations, under the control of the Geological Survey, of which the results are awaited with great interest; and although it may not be assumed that the first or even the second boring must necessarily be successful, the eventual discovery of petroleum can scarcely be considered doubtful.

So much space has been given in foregoing paragraphs to the western half of Canada, that but slight mention can now be accorded to the mineral resources of the older eastern provinces. These are already better known and more fully utilized wherever the actual conditions permit this to be done profitably; but there remain numerous instances in which the products command a world-wide market, and in which rapid expansion may legitimately be anticipated.

The rocks of the Huronian system of geologists, have long been recognized as of particular interest economically, because of the associations with them of various metallic minerals, among which copper, nickel, iron, and gold have so far proved to be the most important. The nickeliferous pyrrhotites and copper ores of Sudbury are already favourably known to metallurgists, and the mines actually in operation are fully supplying the growing demand for nickel. At the moment, the most promising field for investment in