

## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CANADA

a warmer climate. Many species of birds and small mammals not found elsewhere in Canada also occur in this region. From Lake Huron to the prairies the flora and fauna are of the Canadian zone, but from thence westward the flora gradually changes until in the southern parts of Saskatchewan and Alberta it is only along streams and in marshes that many species are seen which occur in the wooded districts. The prairie flora of eastern Manitoba includes a large number of species not found farther west, but very few of these are true prairie plants. Nearly all of them are found south of the Canadian zone in eastern Ontario, showing them clearly to be survivors from the period when the whole of Manitoba was wooded. That they are entirely replaced farther west by characteristic prairie species indicates the greater age of the western prairies. The flora of the prairies of the lower Peace river region is very like that of Manitoba, and a herd of several hundred buffalo still finds its home there. Parts of southwestern Saskatchewan and southern Alberta are clearly referable to the Sonoran zone. The rainfall is light, alkali lakes and marshes are frequent, and the flora and fauna resemble that of Arizona or New Mexico. The larger mammals of the prairie region—antelope, badger, skunk, coyotes, kit fox and wolves—are nowhere very abundant, and are not of great fur value. Geese, ducks and prairie chicken abound; only few fish inhabit the lakes and streams; suckers and jack-fish are the principal species.

**British Columbia.**—The flora of the highest mountains of British Columbia is essentially Arctic in its character, but the general alpine flora varies greatly with the longitude. On the eastern slopes of the Rockies it resembles that of Montana and Wyoming, while in the humid Coast range Alaskan species predominate. The dry plateaus of the interior exhibit many species of the Sonoran zone, and in the Okanagan region, where the rainfall is light, the flora is comparable with that of the arid parts of southern Alberta. Though sometimes specifically distinct, the same mammalian genera inhabit the whole of British Columbia, sheep, goats, deer and grizzly bear being the most important. There are few game birds but grouse, except near the coast. Trout of several species are found in all the lakes and streams.

**Vancouver Island.**—The flora and fauna of Vancouver Island differ little from those of the adjacent mainland, except about Victoria and on the islands in the gulf of Georgia, where many species are found that do not grow elsewhere in Canada. Some of these are characteristic of the Californian flora and are not found in Washington or Oregon. The Yukon district may in some respects be considered as a continuation of the Canadian zone, almost wholly so as regards the general fauna. Many species of plants and some genera are, however, peculiar to the district. This is supposed to be due to the fact that much of the area has escaped glaciation.