

NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

Saskatchewan and Alberta also have lakes, but most of them lie to the north of the Saskatchewan river, while in Manitoba the lakes extend far south in the province. It might be supposed that in provinces extending from 49° N. latitude to 60° N. the northern sections would be much colder than the southern, but the elevation decreases so steadily from south to north that the higher latitude is offset by the lower elevation, and there is very little difference in climate. Thus, while the elevation is 3,427 feet at Calgary, in southern Alberta, it is only 600 feet at the extreme north of the province of Alberta. Edmonton, in latitude N. 53° 33', is 1,269 feet lower than Calgary, in latitude N. 51° 2'; Dunvegan, on the Peace river, in latitude 56° N., is 2,099 feet lower than Calgary; while Fort Vermilion, on the Peace river, in latitude 58° 24', is 2,454 feet lower than Calgary; and Fort Smith, on the Slave river at the northern boundary of the province, over 2,800 feet lower. However, a great part of the Peace river country has a much higher elevation than the river valley, which is not very broad. The great plateau through which the river flows is from 700 to 1,000 feet higher than the level of the river. As we proceed north, beyond the boundary of Alberta into the Northwest Territories, the altitude continues to decrease. A good illustration of the decreasing altitude may be found in the levels of the Mackenzie system of lake reservoirs. Lesser Slave lake has an altitude of 1,890 feet, lake Athabaska an altitude of 690 feet, Great Slave lake an altitude of 520 feet, and Great Bear lake an altitude of 391 feet.

Professor John Macoun, who made a careful study of this north-western country, said that the spring begins in the Peace river district and advances southeast at the rate of 250 miles per day, and that winter begins in Manitoba and goes northwestward at the same rate. Many reasons have been assigned for the warm summers in the far northwest. The elevation of the country is thousands of feet lower than at the United States boundary. The British Columbia mountains are much lower at the north, and there are many passes in them through which come warm Chinook breezes from the Pacific, while the many lakes in the north favourably affect the temperature, and in the summer there is almost no night there. While there are long days in summer there are long nights in midwinter, and temperatures sometimes register very low. Yet even in the winter there is very little darkness, for when the moon is not shining the brilliant northern lights usually make the night bright.

There is land enough in the great hard wheat belt of the prairie country west of the Red river and lake Winnipeg to produce a very large proportion of the world's present demand. Nearly the whole area of these vast prairies is suitable for wheat growing. Scientific agriculturists say that this is the largest continuous expanse of rich soil on the American continent. In addition to a rich top soil there is a deep subsoil containing great stores of nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash, so that without the use of fertilizers many crops can be taken off the land in succession.

The three Prairie Provinces combined have a land area of over 466,000,000 acres. In 1915 there were 13,433,600 acres in wheat, 6,349,600 acres in oats, 1,160,300 acres in barley and 1,377,430 acres in rye, flax,