

copper sulphides in the southern part of Cape Breton island in a series of lava flows, copper deposits in southern Quebec, and salt in Nova Scotia and southeastern New Brunswick.

Interior Plains.—The Interior Plains are underlain by a series of nearly horizontal sedimentary rocks of Palæozoic, Mesozoic and Tertiary ages. The Palæozoic rocks, consisting mainly of limestone, dolomite and shale of Ordovician, Silurian and Devonian ages, form a belt extending north through Manitoba and northwest through Saskatchewan and northeastern Alberta down the basin of the Mackenzie river. East of the Mackenzie, rocks of Cambrian age are exposed in an area of limited extent. The Palæozoic formations rest upon the gently sloping shelf of the Canadian Shield and pass westward with a dip of a few feet a mile beneath the shales and sandstones of Cretaceous age. The Cretaceous formations occupy nearly the whole of the plain from western Manitoba to the Rocky mountains and extend northward nearly to the Mackenzie river. There are also large parts of the Mackenzie basin, particularly of the lower half, in which the Devonian limestones are overlain by Cretaceous sediments. The Cretaceous sediments vary from shales predominantly of marine origin in the east to sandstones predominantly of continental origin in the west. Between the two are alternations of shales of marine origin with sandstones of brackish-water or fresh-water origin.

The Cretaceous beds are overlain in places by sediments of Tertiary age. The most extensive Tertiary formations are found in the hills of southern Saskatchewan and in a belt running north through central Alberta, where they lie in a broad syncline. Glacial till is widespread and clays were deposited in large lakes formed on the retreat of the ice-sheet. A large part of southern Manitoba formed the bed of glacial lake Agassiz.

The Interior Plains region is the great wheat-producing area of Canada. The mining of coal is one of the important industries; bituminous coal and lignite are produced in large quantities in Alberta and lignite in smaller quantities in Saskatchewan. The Cretaceous sediments are the reservoirs of great quantities of natural gas, and these and underlying formations are the source of the oil of the Turner Valley and other oil fields of Alberta. Oil has also been struck in the Devonian rocks north of Norman on the Mackenzie river. Gypsum is obtained from the Palæozoic rocks of Manitoba and also occurs in northern Alberta.

Western Cordillera.—In the western Cordillera is a very thick complete succession of sediments of Precambrian, Palæozoic, Mesozoic and Tertiary ages.

The Rocky mountains consist of a series of great fault blocks in which an enormous thickness of Palæozoic and Mesozoic sediments is exposed. Many thrusts of great extent have resulted in an over-riding of the Mesozoic sediments by the Palæozoic, and the erosion of the softer strata of the former has produced longitudinal valleys between the harder Palæozoic blocks. The Palæozoic formations consist mainly of limestones with less amounts of sandstone and shale. A succession with few breaks from the Cambrian through the Ordovician, Silurian, Devonian and Carboniferous is found, and probably extends with certain deviations throughout the length of the Rocky mountains and Mackenzie mountains. Between the Cambrian and Precambrian beds there is apparently little angular unconformity, but the variation horizontally in the Precambrian strata, on which the Cambrian formations rest, and a similar variation in the ages of the over-lying Cambrian strata furnish evidence of a long period of erosion. The Mesozoic strata consist of soft shales and sandstones some of which are coal-bearing. Strata of Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous ages are represented.