

National Parks of Canada.*—The Dominion Government maintains the National Parks of Canada as a means of preserving for all time regions of outstanding beauty or marked interest. Differing widely in character, and varying in purpose, these areas include: the scenic and recreational parks that extend from the Atlantic Coast to the Rocky and Selkirk Mountains; the national wild-animal parks or preserves—large fenced areas established for the protection and propagation of species once in danger of extinction; and the national historic parks. They are administered by the National Parks Bureau of the Lands, Parks and Forests Branch, Department of Mines and Resources. Under the supervision of this same body are the historic sites of national interest that have been acquired throughout the country. (See pp. 78-90 of the 1938 Year Book.)

In the national parks all wild life is rigidly protected, and primal natural conditions are maintained as far as possible. The local administration of the larger parks is carried out by resident superintendents, assisted by a warden service that is responsible for the necessary game and forest patrols. Opportunities for outdoor life and recreation have been increased by the provision of equipped camp-grounds, bath-houses, and playgrounds, as well as by the construction of golf courses, tennis courts, and outdoor swimming pools. Accommodation is provided in many of the parks by modern hotels, bungalow camps, and chalets operated by private enterprise. Railways and motor roads serve the parks, and nearly 700 miles of motor highways and 3,000 miles of trails have been built to provide access to the outstanding scenic regions.

The scenic and recreational parks include regions of unsurpassed grandeur in the Rocky and Selkirk Mountains of Western Canada. Among these are: Banff, Jasper, and Waterton Lakes National Parks in Alberta, on the eastern slope of the Rockies; Kootenay and Yoho Parks in British Columbia, on the western slope of the Rockies; and Glacier and Mount Revelstoke Parks (also in British Columbia), in the Selkirks. While these parks bear a general resemblance to one another, each possesses individual characteristics and phenomena, varying fauna and flora, and different types of scenery. Banff Park contains the famous resorts, Banff and Lake Louise, and in Jasper Park is the well-known tourist centre, Jasper. Direct motor-highway connection between these points is provided by the Banff-Jasper Highway, which was completed and opened for travel in 1940.

Eastward from the mountains are found Prince Albert National Park in Saskatchewan, a typical example of the forest-and-lake country bordering the northwestern plains region, and Riding Mountain National Park in Manitoba, a well-timbered area dotted with numerous lakes, and at a general altitude of 2,000 feet above sea-level. In Ontario are three small park units established primarily as recreational areas. They are Point Pelee, Georgian Bay Islands, and St. Lawrence Islands National Parks.

The most recent additions to Canada's national park system are in the Maritime Provinces. Cape Breton Highlands National Park, situated in the northern part of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, was established in 1936, and is noted for its rugged but picturesque shoreline, and its rolling mountainous interior, which resembles the Highlands of Scotland. Prince Edward Island National Park extends for about 25 miles along the north shore of that Province, and possesses magnificent sand beaches that provide excellent opportunities for surf-bathing in moderately warm salt water.

* Prepared under the direction of R. A. Gibson, Director, Lands, Parks and Forests Branch, Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa.