

River and Lake Ice.—The dates of break-up and freeze-up in the lakes and rivers of the Eastern Arctic are important in understanding further problems of accessibility, especially for ski- or pontoon-equipped aeroplanes. The river ice in the District of Keewatin usually breaks up in middle or late June, with southerly rivers generally being free of ice earlier than more northern ones. Floating ice will be found for several weeks after the beginning of break-up.

Size and depth of lakes are factors affecting the time of break-up with the smaller lakes clearing first. Most of the lakes are free of ice during the first half of July. However, the large ones may have considerable floating ice long after break-up if their outlets are not large enough to carry away the floes. Drifting ice has been known to remain in some of the lakes into early August before melting. Early in September the lakes and rivers begin to freeze over in the northern sections, and by early October they are usually all frozen throughout the Eastern Arctic.

Summary.—This brief summary of geographic conditions in the Eastern Arctic illustrates the fact that the vast region has a harsh natural environment. Many areas consist of ice-caps, glaciers and permanent snow-fields; other sections are constituted solely of barren bed-rock or glacial deposition. The whole land area is covered with snow for nine months of the year, and at the same time the surrounding seas are ice-bound. Temperatures rise during the short summer period and vegetation flourishes, but lack of developed soil combines with cool summer temperatures to prevent agriculture.

Although the limited possibilities of the Canadian Eastern Arctic have given little encouragement to white settlement, they have been able to support four-fifths of the Canadian Eskimo population. Wild-life resources of the land and sea, supplemented by white man's trade goods exchanged for white fox furs which are trapped during the winter, have adequately maintained this migratory and widely spread people. Their implements and customs have developed from centuries of battling the unfriendly geographic facts of their environment.

Section 2.—Political Geography

Politically, Canada is divided into nine Provinces and two Territories. Each of the provinces is sovereign in its own sphere, as set out in the British North America Act (see pp. 40-60 of the 1942 Year Book) and, as new provinces have been organized from the Dominion lands of the Northwest, they have been granted political status equivalent to that of the original provinces. Yukon and the Northwest Territories with their boundaries of to-day are administered by the Dominion Government. The characteristics of each of the Provinces and of the Territories are reviewed below.

Prince Edward Island.—This, the smallest province of the Dominion, is about 120 miles in length, with an average width of 20 miles and has an area of 2,184 square miles. It lies just off the coast east of New Brunswick and north of Nova Scotia and is separated from both provinces by Northumberland Strait, from 10 to 25 miles wide.

The Island is almost trisected by the deep indentations of Malpeque Bay, north of the town of Summerside, and by the mouth of the Hillsborough River at Charlottetown, which nearly meets Tracadie Bay on the north side. Its rich, red soil and red sandstone formations are distinctive features, and no point on the Island attains a greater altitude than about 450 feet above sea-level. Its climate,