

(3) The Canadian Shield, a vast V-shaped area of ancient rocks surrounding Hudson Bay.

(4) The Interior Plains Region of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, which stretches down Mackenzie Valley to the Arctic Ocean. It is underlain by only slightly disturbed Palæozoic and Mesozoic strata.

(5) The Cordilleran Region, including the mountainous country of the Pacific Coast which is developed on highly disturbed rocks.

(6) The Arctic Archipelago, with which is linked the Hudson Bay Lowland. The former includes the islands lying north of the Canadian Shield, while the latter is a broad, flat region, underlain by flat-lying Palæozoic beds.

The physiographic details of each division are described as follows:—

Appalachian-Acadian Region.—This Region embracing an extension northward of the Appalachian Mountains includes the Maritime Provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) together with the southeastern portion of Quebec. Excepting the Notre Dame Mountains of Gaspé Peninsula, the terrain is not high and the comparatively low elevations are better described as hills. With the exception of the St. John, the rivers are of no great length in their courses down to the sea. It is a beautiful country of diversified character with areas of good farm lands. The broken coast provides many good harbours and the only ocean ports open throughout the whole year that Canada possesses on the Atlantic seaboard.

The rocks of the Appalachian-Acadian Region include sediments, volcanics and intrusives, chiefly of Palæozoic age. In a few places rocks of Precambrian age are known and along the Bay of Fundy Coast are a few areas underlain by Mesozoic rocks. The lowland area of eastern New Brunswick is underlain by little-disturbed Carboniferous beds. Elsewhere, however, throughout the Region, the rocks are nearly everywhere thrown into folds with axes trending in a northeast direction and are, in addition, broken by faults giving rise to a complex structure. During the Glacial Period the whole Region, with the exception of the central part of Gaspé, was overridden by ice sheets.

The area has mineral deposits in great variety but the only substances mined in large quantity at present are coal, asbestos and gypsum. The coal industry is of exceptional importance and the area produces over 40 p.c. of the coal mined in Canada. All of the asbestos and about 88 p.c. of the gypsum mined in Canada are also produced here.

St. Lawrence Lowlands.—South and east of Hudson Bay the predominating physical geographic feature is the very extensive depression containing the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River which connects them with the Atlantic Ocean. The bulk of the drainage basin of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence lies within the limits of the Canadian Shield with the same characteristics as already described. The very important exception is the valley of the St. Lawrence River from Kingston to Quebec and the peninsula of Ontario formed by the Great Lakes which together are generally known as the St. Lawrence Lowlands, about 35,000 square miles in area. At present containing the greater part of the population of Canada, this industrial area is of great economic importance; the climatic conditions and fertile soil combine to make it most suitable for mixed farming.