

CHAPTER XVIII.—TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

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Canada, nearly 4,000 miles in length from east to west, with the main topographic barriers running in a north-south direction, and a relatively small population of 12,119,000 (1945 estimate) thinly distributed along the southern strip of this vast area, presents unusual difficulties from the standpoint of transportation. Different parts of the country are shut off from each other by areas of rough, rocky forest terrain, such as the region lying between New Brunswick and Quebec, the areas north of Lakes Huron and Superior, dividing the industrial region of Ontario and Quebec from the agricultural areas of the prairies, and the barriers interposed by the mountains of British Columbia. To such a country with a population so distributed and producing mainly for export, as do western agriculturists or, like manufacturers, largely for consumption in distant portions of the country itself, cheap transportation is a necessity of life.