

southerly point in Canada) and the most northerly latitude of the Province is 56° 50'. It has an area of 412,582 square miles.

As in Quebec, the surface of Ontario follows the conformation characteristic of the Precambrian Shield except in the Ontario Peninsula where the surface is low and level. The highest point in Ontario is 2,120 feet, on the promontory at the northeastern corner of Lake Superior. Northwest from the Height of Land, the slope descends very gently to Hudson Bay where a large marginal strip (the Hudson Bay Lowlands) is less than 500 feet above sea-level.

Mining is a very important industry in the wide-spread Precambrian area; as in the adjoining Province of Quebec, Ontario is lacking in native coal but is rich in other minerals and contributes almost one-half the total mineral production of Canada. Gold, silver, nickel, copper, zinc, magnesium, dolomite, gypsum, salt and other minerals are mined commercially. Petroleum and natural gas are also produced on an important scale in the Ontario Peninsula (see Chapter XV).

The geographic position of Ontario on the Great Lakes waterways system permits coal to be transported economically from Pennsylvania and iron ore from Minnesota to provide the basis of a large iron and steel industry. There is a rich iron-ore development in the Steep Rock district west of Port Arthur and an abundance of natural resources has made Ontario the foremost industrial province of Canada (see Chapter XVII).

The lands along the St. Lawrence possess excellent soil and general farming is carried on extensively. In the Niagara Belt, fruit farming has been scientifically developed and is a highly specialized industry throughout the Ontario Peninsula.

Vast forest resources in proximity to hydro power (see Chapter XII) are the basis of large wood-using industries and the forests of the north are a rich fur preserve.

Manitoba.—Manitoba, covering 246,512 square miles, is roughly the size of France and is the most central of the provinces. Together with the Provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta, it constitutes the famous Prairie Belt or Interior Plain section of Canada—world renowned for the quality of its wheat.

The Province has a considerable area of prairie land but is also a land of wide diversity combining 400 miles of sea-coast (on a rocky belt along its northeastern boundary, bordering Hudson Bay); great areas of northern mixed forests; large lakes and rivers covering an area of 26,789 square miles; a belt of treeless prairie extending to the southeastern corner of the Province; and patches of open prairie overlain by very fertile soil of great depth. The surface of the Province as a whole is comparatively level, the average elevation being between 500 and 1,000 feet; the greatest height of 2,727 feet is Duck Mountain northwest of Lake Dauphin.

About three-fifths of the Province, east and north of Lake Winnipeg, is underlain with Precambrian rock in which the presence of rich deposits of base metals has been confirmed, as in Ontario and Quebec (see Chapter XV).

The Province, although regarded as basically agricultural, possesses a wealth of water-power resources (Manitoba ranks after Quebec, British Columbia and Ontario on the basis of available power at ordinary minimum flow) that, together with mineral and forest riches, have brought about an expanding industrial development.

Saskatchewan.—Saskatchewan lies between Manitoba and Alberta extending, like each of the Prairie Provinces, from the International Boundary on the south to the 60th parallel of latitude which divides it from the Northwest Territories. It has an area of 251,700 square miles.