

transportation routes have been constructed only with the greatest effort. Although railways have crossed this area for more than half a century, it is only with the recent completion of the Trans-Canada Highway that it has been possible to cross it by motor vehicle. The highest point in Ontario is 2,120 feet, on the promontory on the northeastern corner of Lake Superior. From the height of land, which lies in a wide crescent north of Lake Superior, extending westward to the Lake of the Woods and eastward to Kirkland Lake, the slope descends very gently to James and Hudson Bays where a large marginal strip (the Hudson Bay Lowlands) is less than 500 feet above sea level. This northern area bears the brunt of severe winter cold waves moving eastward from the prairies or southward from the Arctic across Hudson Bay with little

or no modification, and thus experiences very cold winters. Although summers are warm they are short. In the districts immediately along the north shores of the Great Lakes and west of the Lakes there are frost-free periods in excess of 100 days but elsewhere seasons free from frost range from 40 to 100 days.

The lowlands region, which extends over the whole of the southern peninsula between Lakes Ontario, Erie and Huron, and eastward to the Ottawa River adjoining the lowlands of Quebec, is about one sixth the size of northern Ontario. Common to this region are such glacial features as rock plains, morainic hills, till plains, clay plains, drumlins and sand plains. The southwestern tip of the province extends farther south than any other part of Canada. This fact, combined with the ameliorating influence of the lower Great Lakes, gives peninsular Ontario a much milder climate than that of the northern districts. Since it lies in one of the major storm tracks of the Continent, wide variations occur in day-to-day weather, especially in winter, but conditions of severe cold or excessive warmth are not prolonged.

This lowlands area of Ontario is the most densely populated and highly industrialized area of Canada. The population of the province numbered 6,236,092 in 1961, approximately 35 p.c. of the total population of the country, and of that number 5,347,205 lived in the peninsular area. Favourable climatic conditions, fertile soil, ease of travel over relatively unobstructed terrain as well as over the natural transportation routes of the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes influenced the populating of this area. Agriculture became well established and continues to be of major importance to the economy of the province. In fact, with the exception of the great wheat-growing areas of the west, it is by far the most highly productive agricultural area in the country. Its produce is very diversified and many specialized areas have developed—fruit in the Niagara district,

