Department of Mines and Technical Surveys. The work of this Branch includes the compilation of geographical material of national significance and the conducting of geographical surveys in the field. Land surface conditions, land use, types of vegetation and the structure of towns and cities are typical subjects of investigation (see also p. 24). The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, administered by the Branch, deals with all questions of geographical nomenclature affecting Canada and undertakes research and investigation into the origin and usage of geographical names. The Committee is composed of representatives of the federal mapping agencies and other federal agencies concerned with nomenclature and a representative appointed by each province.

### Subsection 2.—Inland Waters

The inland waters of Canada (not including saltwater areas that are a part of Canada) are extensive, constituting about 7.6 p.c. of the total area of the country. Aside from their basic essentiality to the support of life, Canada's fast-flowing rivers and chains of lakes have had a great bearing on the development of the country and on its economic and social well-being. In the early days of exploration and settlement, they were the avenues of transportation and often the source of subsistence. These functions have now diminished in importance; with the exception of the St. Lawrence and certain water routes in the interior and the Far North, the rivers and lakes have assumed other roles in the domestic, industrial, agricultural and recreational life of the people. They still serve as efficient carriers of pulpwood from the forests to the mills and their waters are harnessed to provide power for industry or are dammed and diverted to irrigate and bring life to otherwise waste land.

The inland waters of Canada are best studied by segregating the main drainage basins. The Atlantic drainage basin is the most important, being dominated by the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence system which drains an area of approximately 678,000 sq. miles and forms an unequalled navigable inland waterway through a region rich in natural and industrial resources. From Duluth, Minn., at the head of Lake Superior to Belle Isle at the entrance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence the distance is 2,280 miles. The entire drainage area to the north of the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes is occupied by the southern fringe of the Canadian Shield—a rugged, rocky, plateau region over the edge of which tumble many swift-flowing tributary rivers. These rivers, as well as the St. Lawrence itself, provide the electric power necessary to operate the great industries of the area. South of the St. Lawrence, the smaller rivers are important locally. The St. John, for instance, drains a fertile area and provides most of New Brunswick's hydro power.

The Hudson Bay drainage basin, though the largest in area, is the least important economically. Only the Nelson and Churchill Rivers have power potential within economical distance of settled areas. The two main branches of the Saskatchewan River, tributary to the Nelson, drain one of Canada's great agricultural regions and are now the bases of important irrigation projects.

The Arctic drainage basin is dominated by the Mackenzie, one of the world's longest rivers, which flows 2,635 miles from the head of the Finlay River to the Arctic Ocean and drains an area in the three westernmost provinces of approximately 700,000 sq. miles. Except for a 16-mile portage in Alberta, it is possible for steamboats to navigate from the end of steel at Waterways on the Athabasca River to the mouth of the Mackenzie, a distance of 1,700 miles.

The rivers of the Pacific basin rise in the mountains of the Cordilleran Region and flow to the Pacific Ocean over tortuous, precipitous courses, rushing through steep canyons and tumbling over innumerable falls and rapids. They provide power for large hydro