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 developments and in season swarm with salmon returning inland to their spawning grounds. The major rivers of the basin are the Fraser which rises in the Rocky Mountains and toward its mouth flows through a rich agricultural area, the Columbia which is an international river with a total fall of 2,650 feet during its course and has thus a tremendous power potential, and the Yukon River which is also an international river but, though the largest on the Pacific slope, is at present relatively unimportant economically.

Table 3 lists the principal rivers of Canada and their tributaries. The tributaries and sub-tributaries are indicated by indention of names; thus the Ottawa and other rivers are shown as tributary to the St. Lawrence, and the Gatineau and other rivers as tributary to the Ottawa.

3.—Lengths of Principal Rivers and Their Tributaries

Drainage Basin and River	Length	Drainage Basin and River	Length
	miles		miles
Flowing into the Atlantic Ocean		**Flowing into the Atlantic Ocean**—concluded	
St. Lawrence (to head of St. Louis, Minn.)	1,900	St. Lawrence—concluded	
Ottawa	696	Via the Great Lakes—concluded	
Gatineau	240	Moira	60
du Lièvre	205	Thessalon	40
Coulonge	135	St. John	418
Madawaska	130	Romaine	270
Rouge	115	Natashquan	241
Mississippi	105	Moisie	210
Petawawa	95	Hamilton	208
South Nation	90	Exploits	153
Dumoine	80	Naskaupi	152
North	70	Canairiktok	139
North Nation	60	Eagle	138
Saguenay (to head of Peribonca)	475	Miramichi	135
Peribonca	280	Marguerite	130
Mistassini	185	Gander	102
Ashuapmuchuan	165		
St. Maurice	325		
Mattawin	100	**Flowing into Hudson Bay**	
Manicouagan (to head of Racine de Bouleau)	310		
Outardes	270	Nelson (to head of Bow)	1,600
Bersimis	240	Saskatchewan (to head of Bow)	1,205
Richelieu	210	South Saskatchewan	865
St. Francis	165	Red Deer	385
Chaudière	120	Bow	315
Via the Great Lakes—		Belly	180
French (to head of Sturgeon)	180	North Saskatchewan	760
Sturgeon	110	Red (to head of Sheyenne)	545
Grand	165	Assiniboine	590
Thames	163	Souris	450
Spanish	153	Qu'Appelle	270
Trent	150	Winnipeg (to head of Firesteel)	475
Mississagi	140	English	330
Nipigon (to head of Ombabika)	130		