



Maple sugar time in Quebec Province.

The St. Lawrence Lowlands

The St. Lawrence River, draining the five Great Lakes—Superior, Huron, Michigan, Erie, and Ontario—provides a great natural waterway leading into the heart of the continent. There is deep water navigation for more than 800 miles (1,288 kilometers) inland to the port of Montreal from the Strait of Belle Isle at the northern entrance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The river and the lower lakes are flanked by the region known as the St. Lawrence Lowlands, which extends in Canada westward from the city of Quebec to Lake Huron and Georgian Bay, including the triangle of southern Ontario lying between the lower lakes and the Ottawa Valley.

This region of southern Quebec and Ontario consists of a gently sloping plain of highly fertile land. The climate is relatively moderate owing to the influence of the Great Lakes. In the southern portion it is warm enough for the cultivation of such crops as peaches, tobacco and grapes.

Between Montreal and the entrance to Lake Ontario at

Kingston the great rapids of the St. Lawrence, which constitute a spectacular barrier to inland shipping, have been by-passed by locks and canals. The Welland canal provides the channel for shipping past the broad Niagara Falls—a drop of 160 feet between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario.

The St. Lawrence Lowlands are the heart of Canada. More than half of Canada's people make their homes in this region of fertile farms and orchards and thriving industrial and commercial centres. Here are found Montreal and Toronto, the largest cities in Canada, each with a population of over one million; Ottawa, the nation's capital; and two-score other cities.

Encircling Hudson Bay in a giant horseshoe is the vast Precambrian or Laurentian Shield. A plateau-like region, seldom more than 2,000 feet above sea-level, it extends from the Atlantic coast of Labrador westward to Lake Winnipeg, where its contour sweeps northward past Great Bear Lake to the Arctic Ocean. The prehistoric withdrawal of glaciers and the erosion of ages have produced this expanse of rounded hills, forest, and rock, with thousands of lakes, rivers and bogs (muskeg).

Rich deposits of mineral ore, including iron, gold, silver, nickel, copper, platinum, cobalt and uranium lie within its ancient rocks. There are great stands of timber; and these forest resources of spruce and pine are admirably suited for the production of lumber, pulp and paper.

The Precambrian Shield

Typical farming country near Charlottetown, P.E.I.

