

side of his route. The area between these lines was measured, and in this way he calculated that out of a total area of 3,729,665 square miles, there were about 1,000,000 square miles of unexplored territory in Canada. About 600,000 of this lay in western Canada, the rest being in what are now the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. No area less than 7,500 square miles was included.

Recently I had occasion to revise this estimate, but believing that the 50-mile strip was too wide, I took a strip 15 miles on either side of the explorers' route and reduced the explored lines to a width of 30 miles, which I think is quite enough. The result is that I find in western Canada there are areas aggregating 600,000 square miles in extent which must still be considered as unexplored. Of this area 240,000 square miles lie within the drainage basin of the Mackenzie river, an area which is almost equal to the area of the Province of Saskatchewan.

In commenting upon the area of unexplored territory that we have within the borders of the Dominion, Dawson remarked that it might be considered a reproach upon Canadians as indicating a lack of justifiable curiosity on what our country contains. That reproach still remains on us, and will continue so long as such a large proportion of our country remains unknown. Expeditions into the Arctic are useful in their way, and add much to our knowledge of those little known regions, but it seems to me imperative that we should devote more of our attention to the more accessible parts of our unexplored region, on the chance of finding something on which to build productive industries and open fresh outlets for our national energy.

Every explorer, even at the present time, going into the north country, away from the regular lines of trail, takes a certain amount of risk, though that risk is not as great as it might appear to those who have no knowledge of that kind of work. Life, even for the natives, is a constant struggle, and the law of the survival of the fittest holds more rigidly in that region than in southern latitudes. It is not so much the severity of the climate and the intense cold of the winter season that take their toll of human life, but the uncertainty of the food supply. Game is very plentiful in certain parts and at certain seasons of the year, but the habits of some of the animals are migratory, especially the caribou, on which such a large proportion of the inhabitants depend for food, and it is absolutely necessary to know those habits before one ventures without a sufficient food supply into regions distant from the few scattered trading posts.