

## The Prairies

Save for the common blessing of a rich and productive soil, the Canadian Prairies bear little resemblance to the St. Lawrence Lowlands. After the busy industrial cities and towns in Ontario and Quebec the almost empty plains, stretching endlessly to the horizon, are a striking contrast.

The cities are smaller here. Winnipeg, Canada's fourth largest city, exceeds 475,000 in population, but only three others, Edmonton, Calgary and Regina, have more than 100,000 residents. Most of the people live in smaller communities strung out along the lines of the railroads like beads on a string. The smallest of these settlements may consist of only a house or two flanked by a cluster of barns and sheds protected by a clump of trees; the larger ones are often dominated by the familiar row of grain elevators whose functional architecture is distinctively North American.

The plains slope gently toward the Rockies so that Calgary, in the foothills, is 2,700 feet higher than Winnipeg, 800 miles to the east. On the rolling and generally treeless country between these two points is grown the world's finest hard wheat. The average crop is 450 million bushels, but in a good year as many as 700 million have been harvested.

Here are the "wide-open spaces". Saskatchewan wheat farms and Alberta ranches often encompass several square miles. The people are used to travelling great distances and

Harvest time on the Prairies  
as the earth yields up its golden  
store of wheat

