CLIMATE

The climate of Central British Columbia may be said in general terms to be moderate or very temperate. It has a considerable yearly latitude and varies from west to east in fairly well defined belts paralleling the coast line and the Rocky mountains. These belts correspond closely to the topographical features of the country and may be roughly defined under four headings, namely, the Coastal belt, the interior plateau belt, the Rocky Mountain belt and the Great Plains belt. The interior belt in the southern part of the province is divided into wet and dry sections, but the dry portion extends in a very limited degree into Central British Columbia and may be omitted in considering the climate of this area.

The Coastal belt comprises that part lying west of the summit of the Coast range of mountains. It has the mildest climate of the four belts, also the heaviest precipitation. The mild climate is due mainly to the warm Japan ocean current which flows southerly along the coast and exerts a moderating influence somewhat similar to that of the famous Gulf Stream of the Atlantic ocean. The westerly winds of the Pacific liberate most of their moisture before crossing the high, cold peaks of the Coast mountains and thus give a very heavy rainfall in this belt. The proximity of the ocean with the moderating influence of its body of water tends to maintain a uniform and minimum range of daily variation in the temperature. The range between summer and winter temperature is also small. Summer days seldom rise above 80 degrees Fahrenheit, while the winters are comparatively mild, zero weather being an exception.

The greater part of the precipitation of the Coast belt is in the form of rain except in the higher altitudes of the mountains where snow can be seen at any time of the year. The snowfall is nevertheless heavy itself as the total yearly precipitation amounts to about 100 inches on an average. In reckoning the total precipitation it is the practice to consider ten inches of snow equal to one inch of rain.

On a following page a table appears showing a summary of temperature and precipitation records of the year 1918 obtained by the Meteorological Service of Canada at twelve stations situated in various parts of Central British Columbia. Three of these are coast stations, namely, Anyox, Prince Rupert and Bellakula, while a fourth, Terrace, lies in the Skeena valley in the heart of the Coast mountains. It will be observed by a reference to this table that the coast stations show a heavy precipitation, that of Prince Rupert amounting to 93.42 inches, Anyox 67.10, Bellakula 58.01, and Terrace 46.89. The average yearly precipitation is somewhat higher, that of Prince Rupert being about 107 inches. On the immediate coast there is more rain and snow than in the districts lying at the heads of inlets and in the river valleys nearer the mountains. In January of 1918 Anyox had some 48 inches of snow and Prince Rupert only 4, but the total rainfall and snowfall combined of the one was almost equal to that of the other. Bellakula has an average yearly rainfall of about 36 inches and a snowfall of about 54 inches. In the Naas valley the rainfall and snowfall are both heavier. At Terrace both rain and snow are less. Zero weather is seldom encountered in the coast regions. At Terrace the weather is