

insensibly into the Belt of Interior Plateaus. In the railway zone the plateau form first becomes marked in the vicinity of Sicamous. At the extreme northwest the range is probably best considered as terminating at the master valley occupied by the headwaters of the North Thompson river.

Dawson and several later authors have used the name "Interior Plateau" for the broad region between the Columbia and Coast ranges. The present writer prefers to use the plural form "plateaus." The region is obviously not a plateau in its present form and topographic relations; on the other hand, there is no certainty that it ever was a plateau unit, since dissected. Large areas of its pre-Palaeozoic, Palaeozoic, and Triassic rocks were clearly baselevelled and remnants of the resulting peneplain now form local plateaus (Plates XI and XII). Other large areas underlain by Tertiary lavas similarly form plateau elements separated by comparatively young valleys. In many places these lavas lie nearly or quite horizontal. They have everywhere suffered erosion, but as yet there is no proof that these plateau facets are parts of the same general peneplain which still remains in the areas of truncated pre-Jurassic terranes. Throughout most or all of Jurassic, Cretaceous, and Eocene times this Cordilleran belt was being denuded, and reduction to the peneplain form would be the result, at least locally, by the beginning of the Oligocene, when the principal lava floods of the belt were poured out. One may well doubt that the succeeding time has been long enough for a general peneplanation of the new volcanic relief and the older rock complexes in the belt. To describe the belt as the Interior plateau implies more or less definitely that it is a physiographic unit; more concretely, that it is a dissected peneplain. In view of many unsolved problems, as, for example, the fixing of a distinction between constructional lava plateaus and two-cycle plateaus in this region, that simple conception of the belt has not been justified by proof. Its simplicity may be as dangerous as it is alluring.

The individual plateaus vary in altitude, as here illustrated: