

into the sea, the banks become low alluvium. The islands extend for some distance into the sea, and are covered with wood or grass, and a variety of plants and herbs and berries of different kinds.

5. The direct course of westward advance may now be resumed. The progress that may be effected by the aid of the great river systems of the interior reaches to the very base of the mountains; and the eligibility of the whole breadth of country from the frontier to at least the Itzechadzue renders it very desirable to connect the advance so far made by a line of road (railroad) from the Bullpound River to the bend of the River of the Mountains. It would give it solidity and compactness, and afford a favourable base of operations for selecting the best passes through the mountains, and render the first, that might be improved, available for all parts of the country eastward.

From the S. to within a comparatively short distance of the present British frontier the Rocky Mountains present an almost impenetrable barrier between the eastern and western shores of the continent. The N. pass by the N.W. branch of the River of the Mountains to Lynn Canal has been mentioned already. The altitude to be surmounted is not very great, but the route is circuitous, far to the N., and partly through the Russian territory. The close approximation, if not identity, of the sources of the rivers Columbia and Athabasca, has also been pointed out. There are three passes on the direct line of route, concerning which some information has been collected.

The route of Sir Alexander Mackenzie adheres to the course of the Peace and Frazer River until the confluence of the river Western Road is arrived at. The wonderful, unequalled facilities which conduct up to Rocky Mountain House on the Peace River are there exchanged for comparative impediments; but the inducements multiply more than correspondingly. A great river is still in front—the streams that flow into the Pacific almost in sight—the goal nearly attained; and who can fail to participate in the sentiments of Mackenzie, that fired his determination, and crowned his efforts with success?

After leaving Rocky Mountain House, the westward progress by water is, for a time, so frequently interrupted as to be scarcely available as a natural watercourse. The waters flow with great rapidity between steep, narrow, and often precipitous banks; after a while, however, continual reaches of navigable, almost still, water, from 25 to 30 miles in length, re-occur, and beautiful and extensive sheets of water burst suddenly upon the view. The summit level, far from being crowned with never-melting snow, consists of two tranquil lakes, the borders of which are clothed with wood, and the whole scene is enlivened by humming and

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