

more distant sea-coast. In this manner, the whole country presents a complete network of water communication; and there is probably no portion of it to which the Hudson's Bay *voyageur* cannot paddle his light canoe, with an occasional unpacking at the various 'portages,' or falls in the course of the streams. Thus, to select one from many instances, the Peace River rises on the western side of the Rocky Mountains—at no very considerable distance, indeed, from the shores of the Pacific. Thence it threads its way through the valleys and passes of this great chain, and at length issues from its eastern flanks, a broad and deep stream, through portals some 3,000 or 4,000 feet in perpendicular height—apparently gliding from the heart of the mountain mass which towers overhead. From this point, pursuing its course with much tortuous winding, it joins Lake Athabasca. Lake Athabasca communicates with Lake Wollaston: Lake Wollaston with Deer Lake. From Deer Lake there is a complete network of water communication, by stream and lake, to the shores of Hudson's Bay. If the Charter placed its holders in possession of all lands watered by streams flowing into Hudson's Bay, it might be said to surrender to them the sources of the Peace River rising in New Caledonia—of the Saskatchewan, which might be traced from Oregon—of the River of the Mountains, which took its rise not far from the Russian possessions—of the Red River, which sprung from United States' confines—of the Churchill, which was fed by Polar snows—of a thousand streams and watercourses which permeated every portion of the 'Indian countries.'

But, on the other hand, still more peculiar features of the country supplied arguments to their already powerful rival. The whole of this great lake system is subject to considerable fluctuation. Controlled by no important or long-sustained fall of the huge expanse of wilderness stretching from the foot of the Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic and Polar Oceans, its waters, in their restless uncertainty, more nearly resemble the heavings of the great Deep itself. At one time, a lake discharges its outpourings towards the east: at another time, its redundant waters are found flowing towards the west. Now, Lake Athabasca supplies the Great Slave Lake: anon, it is itself the recipient. In this manner, the great streams which connect these reservoirs not infrequently change the direction of their currents. Now, the canoe of the explorer drops gently into the Lake of the Great Bear: his successor, on the same route, finds himself obliged to pull, and even to push with strong poles, against a swift tide. Even the rivers independent of