

I shall now pass to that other great division of the country which has been designated the Mountain Region.

This is part of the great elevated mountain zone of North America, which begins in the Cordilleras and elevated plateaus of Mexico and extends to the Arctic Ocean. If we examine the orographical map, it will be observed that the Rocky Mountain zone, although it has many subsidiary mountain ranges, is characterised for the greater part of its length by two prominent and perfectly distinct Alpine chains, each with many spurs or branches. One of these main chains is directly along the Pacific coast: in Canada it is known as the Cascade Mountains, and farther south as the Sierra Nevadas. The other is in the Rocky Mountains proper: it observes a general, although not perfect, parallelism with the coast. The distance between the crests of these two lofty chains varies from 1,000 miles in the United States to 300 miles in Canada, and from this circumstance may be attributed the remarkable widening of the alluvial plains in the Canadian half of North America.

I shall now confine my remarks to that portion of the Rocky Mountain Zone within the limits of Canada.

The Cascade Chain rises abruptly from the sea level, presenting from the water an extremely bold and defiant aspect. The average height of the many serrated summits will probably range from 5,000 to 8,000 feet above sea level, and some of its central crests and loftiest peaks rival in elevation the main Rocky Mountain Chain. The main Rocky Mountain Chain is in Canada from 300 to 400 miles distant from the Pacific coast. This chain rises like a colossal wall above the continental plain on its eastern side. Its flanks are, however, deeply gashed, and great counterfort-like spurs jut out, between which the rivers which water the Prairie Region take their rise. Much of this great mountain barrier rises over 8,000 feet above sea level. The loftiest central peaks enter the region of perpetual snow; some of them, indeed, reach an elevation estimated at 15,000 feet above the ocean. On the western flank of the chain are several independent groups of mountain, known by local names. They are separated from each other by narrow valleys and deep chasms, some of which are prolonged in the direction of the Prairie Region, forming passes through the mountains. Some of these passes are from 6,000 to 7,000 feet above the sea, and they range down to less than 2,000 feet. These transverse openings through the lofty chain afford comparatively easy passages from one side to the other. The lowest and most remarkable is in about latitude 56 degrees. Here the Peace River