

above the mountain lakes, and had its summit covered with ice." The party here passed near two lakes not more than 300 or 400 yards in circuit, and 200 yards apart. "Canoe River takes its rise in one of them, flowing westward into the Columbia; while the other lake gives birth to one of the branches of the Athabasca, which runs first eastward, then northward, and which, after its junction with the Unjehlah north of the Lake of the Mountains, takes the name of Slave River as far as Slave Lake, and afterward that of Mackenzie River, until it empties into the Frozen Ocean. On the 15th of May they began to descend the eastern declivities of the Rocky Mountains, and encamped under some cypress trees, the common timber being stunted pine and cedar. As a striking contrast on the western side, the hills were covered with immense forests, mostly of Norway pine and cedars of a prodigious size. "17th May, encamped on the margin of a verdant plain called by the guide Coro Prairie. 18th—loaded horses and shot seven wild ducks, reached Rocky Mountain House, situated on the shore of a little lake in the midst of a wood, surrounded, except on the water side, by steep rocks, inhabited by mountain sheep and goats. From here is seen in the west the chain of the Rocky Mountains covered with perpetual snow."

"People so often speak of the Rocky Mountains that I desire here to say a few words on that subject. They extend nearly in a straight line from the 35th parallel to the mouth of Mackenzie River, in the Arctic, in latitude about 65 deg. north. This distance, 30 deg. of latitude, equivalent to 2,250 miles, is, however, only the mean side of a right-angled triangle, the base of which occupies 26 deg. of longitude, in latitude 35 deg. or 36 deg., that is to say, about 1,600, while the chain of mountains from the hypotenuse, so that the real, and as it were, diagonal length of the chain across the continent is nearly 3,000 miles from southeast to northwest. In such a vast extent of mountains, the perpendicular height and width of base must be very unequal. The party were eight days in crossing them, whence I conclude from our rate of travel, that they have at this point, about latitude 54 deg., a base of 200 miles—with an altitude of about 6,000 feet above the sea," while the real height of the Rocky Mountains, as since ascertained, average 12,000 feet, the highest known peak being 16,000 feet.

From the mountains the party descended in canoes fastened together, and on the 1st of June reached the confluence of the river Pembina, which flows from the south and takes its rise in a spur of the Rocky Mountains. On the 2nd June they reached Slave