

By physical geography, I mean, here, the way in which the seas, mountains and plains of a sufficiently large district are disposed towards each other; and it is due to the close relation existing between these diversities of surface and climate, that the latter is not a whimsical thing, but one of the steadiest and most characteristic features of any region—even though the *weather* there may, at certain seasons, be most capricious.

The Canadian West I take to mean, for the purposes of this lecture, all of north-eastern America, from the limits of the forests around Hudson's Bay and Lake Superior, westward to the Pacific Ocean.

A glance at the map is the first thing in order.

We find that north of the International boundary line—or, better, let us say north of the watershed between Canadian rivers and those tributary to the Mississippi and the Missouri—there is an immense area of treeless plains nearly a thousand miles wide east and west, and stretching north-west, in triangular form, to the border of Alaska. This may be said to be *one* climatic area, which we may call that of the Plains.

West of the Plains stand the serried ranks of the grand old Rockies, forming a belt of snow-bearing mountains averaging 200 miles in breadth, and rising everywhere into the zone of perpetual snow and ice. This belt has a climate of its own, which we may term that of the Rocky Mountains. Beyond this lies the interior basin of British Columbia, about as large as Manitoba, forming a third climatic area, which may be named the *Kamloops Climate*, for want of a better term. A fourth climate, that of the rainy Coast Range, is attached to the narrow but lofty rank of mountains improperly called the Cascades, which extend parallel with the Pacific coast in southern British Columbia, and form the coast itself in the northern part of that Province. Last of all, there is the strip of lowland and the tongue-like valleys along the coast itself, together with the islands bordering it, which constitute a fifth climatic area. Each of these divisions is, in fact, a long strip of country,