

TOPOGRAPHICAL

British Columbia is Canada's most westerly province, comprising all the Pacific seaboard belonging to the Dominion, together with many coast islands and an extensive inland territory. For many years it had the largest area of any province in Canada and now holds third place, being exceeded by Quebec and Ontario only. Its total area is 355,855 square miles, of which 353,116 square miles are land and 2,739 square miles are covered by water.

British Columbia is the mountain province of Canada. Almost its entire area is made up of gigantic ranges whose majestic peaks clothed in perpetual ice and snow rival in magnitude and beauty the famous Alps themselves; of deep, fertile valleys of exceeding fertility where luscious fruits and luxuriant vegetation are watered by foaming mountain streams and sheltered by overhanging cliffs, attain a degree of perfection unequalled elsewhere; or of broad sunny plateaus of grassy lands interspersed with numerous lakes and streams, bordered by gently-rolling hills of greenest woods and drained by networks of swiftly-flowing streams. The province is a veritable "sea of mountains" and its grandeur of scenery, congenial climate and wealth of natural resources are unsurpassed by any other district of equal magnitude in the world.

From east to west Canada is made up of five great physiographic divisions, namely, the Appalachian region embracing the Maritime Provinces and Eastern Quebec, the St. Lawrence lowlands of Southern Quebec and Ontario, the Great Plains region of Western Canada, the Laurentian plateau surrounding Hudson bay, and the Cordilleran region extending from the Rocky mountains to the Pacific coast. The greater part of British Columbia lies within the Cordilleran division with a triangular area in the northeast corner of the province extending into the Great Plains division. The outstanding topographical feature of the province is the Rocky Mountain range, the "backbone" of the North American continent. It crosses Canada in a north-westerly and southeasterly direction and makes the "continental divide" that parts the waters of the Pacific slope from those flowing easterly.

The Rocky mountains vary in elevation from 2,700 feet in the vicinity of Dease lake to a climax of 13,968 feet in mount Robson. Pine pass has an elevation of 2,850 feet, Yellowhead pass 3,700 feet and Kicking Horse pass 5,332 feet. There are several peaks exceeding 10,000 feet in elevation and innumerable lesser mountains, hills and plateaus. It has been estimated that if the whole of British Columbia were brought to a level plane the elevation would be about 3,500 feet above the level of the sea.

The Rocky Mountain range runs practically parallel to the Pacific coast at a distance of 350 or 400 miles inland. A lesser and more irregular range follows the coast more closely and constitutes what is known as the "Cascade" and "Coast" mountains. Between these two principal mountain ranges lies a vast intervening plateau.

The Cordilleran division thus subdivides itself naturally into these three great belts, the Eastern, Central and Pacific. The Eastern belt is comprised of the Rocky mountain system and may be considered, generally speaking, as a mountainous