

tions from the Pacific side had been carried at that time. The old trail was completely blocked up by fallen timber, and had to be cut out afresh; the original axemen's marks were almost grown over, and had become covered with thirteen rings during that number of years that had elapsed.

The old boundary-cairn was found to be in perfect preservation, the remains of an old flagstaff, around which the stones were built, being still in position and standing out conspicuously above the top. There was no appearance of any Indian or white man having visited the spot since the boundary parties were there, 13 years ago. The beavers had, however, been very busy during this period; for at one place on the old trail they had formed a lake by constructing a dam across a narrow part of the valley, which caused the water coming from the mountains to be kept back till they overflowed the obstruction. From the mountain-summit the view embraces a sea of peaks and ridges of the boldest outline, and between these knife-edged ridges occur amphitheatres of horse-shoe form with precipitous sides 3000 to 4000 feet deep, enclosing at their bottom a placid lake, in which the waters, from their great depth, appear of deep blue colour. A great difference is observable in the physical appearance of the country on the east and west of the dividing range of mountains. To the east may be seen glimpses of the treeless plain, which extends for 800 miles to the eastward, and to the west of the mountain-range is a confused mass of rugged peaks and ridges and nine-clad valleys, which extend in almost an unbroken series for 400 miles to the Pacific coast.

During the 10 weeks of magnificent summer weather, the Joint Commission had completed the surveying operations comprising 350 miles of boundary, to the terminal point on the summit of the Rocky Mountains, and the British Commission commenced their retreat eastward from the mountains on 29th August. Official information had been received from the Canadian Government at Ottawa that the Indians intended to attack us on the march homewards. They were known to be in great force in the neighbourhood—the Blackfoot tribe alone numbering 6000 warriors—and their scouts were seen to be watching our movements. The fact was rather ominous that none of their chiefs had visited our camp, so nothing was known of their intentions or of the light in which they regarded the proceedings of the Commission. We commenced our retreat at a much earlier date probably than they had expected, and as we were then collected into sufficiently large parties to protect ourselves no molestation was offered. The camp was always formed by the waggons being arranged in a circle, and into the enclosure so formed the horses were driven at night.