

as well as the Arctic oceans. The lake stands 4330 feet above the sea, and forms the summit of a pass 1400 feet lower than the Athabasca pass 10 or 12 miles to the west, 950 feet lower than the Kicking Horse pass followed by the Canadian Pacific Railway, and 610 feet higher than the Yellowhead pass.

The valley of Fortress lake, belonging as it does to the British Columbian side of the Rockies, shows a richer vegetation than other valleys we had visited. White and black spruce grow to an immense height. A trunk stranded on the shore was 60 feet long, nearly 2 feet thick at the smaller end, and had not yet branched. A few pines grow along the shore, and aspens, balsam poplars, and willows grow on the plain at the head of the lake. The giant cedar and the prickly "devil's club," characteristic growths of British Columbia, occur very sparingly. White winter-green and half a dozen other berry-bearing plants thrive in marshy places of the valley, while the rhododendron and the three Rocky Mountain heathers cover wide stretches of the mountain sides. Avalanche tracks, from which the big trees have been swept, grow up with gooseberries, currants, and raspberries, and make favourite haunts of the bears.

Our return route was practically the same as the one followed in coming out, though the Saskatchewan was now fordable, saving us a *détour* at the Kootenay plains. Apparently no Indians crossed the great river that summer, since we found no traces of them, and but one white man beside ourselves, a prospector named McGavan, whom we ferried over on our way out. The mountains through which we travelled may be said to have no human inhabitants, though a few families of Stonies hunt the sheep there now and then.

To sum up the topography of the Rockies between the Saskatchewan and the Athabasca in a few sentences, we may describe the eastern side of the Rockies as consisting of a series of more or less steeply tilted blocks facing north-east in precipitous escarpments, and having gentler slopes following the dip of the strata toward the Pacific. They rise to a height of 8000 or 9000 feet toward the east, and 2000 or 3000 feet higher toward the watershed. They are evidently the result of tremendous reversed faults, like those described by McConnell from Bow pass.* Somewhat rarely these faults are replaced by sharp folds, *e.g.* Sentinel mount in the Kootenay plains. Eighty parallel ridges result from these faults along the Brazeau, but the number varies in other parts. Running north-west and south-east between these parallel ranges we find a somewhat regular series of longitudinal valleys, generally occupied by creeks tributary to the main rivers, while the latter have cut for themselves larger, less regular, transverse valleys approximately at right angles to the others.

* 'Geol. Sur. Can.,' 1886, vol. ii. D.