

elevation of the country between the Rocky Mountains and the Red River, and the exposure of its western portion to the warm moist winds which find their way from the Pacific Ocean through the low passes of the narrowed chain of the Rocky Mountains, without being dried and chilled by passing over broad elevated plateaus. A glance at the map, aided by a few figures, points out how the plains of British America descend from the high Missouri plateau on the one side and the Rocky Mountains on the other. Edmonton, on the Upper Saskatchewan, at the very base of the mountains, is only 3,000 feet above the sea, about the height of the Missouri plateau 1,000 miles further east. From here the course of the river shows a sharp decline in elevation towards the Arctic and Winnipeg basins. There is a larger and more general decline from the Missouri itself to the north. The Missouri has not a single tributary on its northern side, except the Milk River, which flows nearly parallel with it. All the rivers of the country flow down a rapid slope north and east. The fertile belt of the Saskatchewan and Peace Rivers is the great interior plain of the continent, and its decline in elevation from the Missouri plateau is enough, according to the formula which makes three or four hundred feet of elevation equal to a degree of latitude in its effect upon temperature, to account for a stationary or rising mean temperature from the International boundary to the Peace River, 700 miles north. The elevation of the temperature of the region east of the mountains, by warm winds from the Pacific, is one of the traditions of the country, and it has been confirmed by scientific investigation. Prof. Macoun, the Dominion botanist, found on the Peace River a mean temperature, the same as that of Montreal, and a belt of land 150 by 750 miles as well adapted to wheat raising as Ontario.

The question of fuel naturally connects itself with that of climate, and, in the absence of timber on a great part of the fertile belt, it becomes a serious one for the settler. There are heavy woods north of the Saskatchewan, on the east slope of the mountains, and at some points the banks of its streams are wooded, but by far the greater part of the fertile belt is treeless. In this view the great outcrops of coal on the Upper Saskatchewan, the Peace River, and even upon the Assiniboine become of