

the higher latitudes, than it is in the interior, or in corresponding latitudes on the Atlantic coast ; this is easily explained and understood when the natural forces productive of this milder temperature are contemplated. The most important among them is a thermal current resembling the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic. This current, known as the Japanese or Kuro Siwo, has its origin under the equator near the Molucca and Philippine Islands, passes northward along the coast of Japan, and crosses the Pacific to the southward of the Aleutian Islands, after throwing a branch through Bering Sea, in the direction of Bering Straits. The main current strikes the Queen Charlotte Islands, where it divides, one branch going south along the coast of British Columbia, while the other turns northward towards Sitka, and thence westward to the Kadiak and Shumagin islands. The comparatively warm waters of these currents affect the temperature of the superjacent atmosphere, which, absorbing the latent heat, carries it to the coast with all its mollifying effects. Thus the oceanic and atmospheric currents combine in mitigating the coast climate of Alaska, and the process is greatly aided by the configuration of the extreme north-western shores of the continent, backed as they are with an almost impenetrable barrier of lofty mountains, which holds back from the interior the warm, moist, atmospheric currents coming in from the ocean, deflecting at the same time the ice-laden northern gales coming from the interior.

The force of these influences as mitigating the coast climate of Alaska becomes evident, when it is stated that the mean winter temperature of Sitka is nine degrees higher than that of Halifax, although Halifax is nearly 900 miles further south than Sitka.

It is obvious that with the presence of these warm, moist, currents, precipitation must be great, and so it is. The greatest rainfall on the continent of America is found on its north-west coast. The maximum recorded annual precipitation is 134 inches, or a little over eleven feet. Here in Ottawa we have about three feet, and think ourselves fairly well supplied at that.

It is not alone the excessive rain that makes the coast of Alaska somewhat undesirable as a place of abode, but the rain that does not come down, the mist and fog. The number of days in a year on which