

base for further surveys. In addition to this we now have an instrumental survey of the Stikine from its mouth to the head of navigation (Telegraph Creek), which is connected with Dease Lake by a carefully paced traverse. This is continued by a detailed running or track survey following the lines of the Dease, Upper Liard and Pelly Rivers, and connecting with Mr. Ogilvie's line at the mouth of the Lewis, the total distance from the mouth of the Stikine to this point by the route travelled being about 544 miles. Adding to this the distance from the mouth of the Lewis back to the coast at the head of Lynn Canal (377 miles), the entire distance travelled by us during the exploration amounts to 1,322 miles. This, taken in connection with the coast line between the Stikine and Lynn Canal, circumscribes an area of about 63,200 square miles, the interior of which is still, but for the accounts of a few prospectors and reports of Indians, a terra incognita. The same description, with little qualification, applies to the whole surrounding region outside the surveyed circuit, but much general information concerning the country has been obtained, which will facilitate further explorations.

The region traversed by the routes just mentioned, including the extreme northern part of British Columbia and the southern part of the Yukon District (as previously defined), is drained by three great river systems, its waters reaching the Pacific by the Stikine, the Mackenzie (and eventually the Arctic Ocean), by the Liard, and Behring Sea, by the Yukon. The south-eastern part of the region is divided between the two first named rivers, whose tributary streams interlock, the Stikine making its way completely through the Coast Ranges in a south-westerly direction, while the Liard, on a north-easterly bearing, cuts across the Rocky Mountains to the Mackenzie Valley. The watershed separating these rivers near Dease Lake has a height of 2,730 feet, and both streams may be generally characterized as very rapid.

To the north-westward, branches of the Stikine and Liard again interlock with the head-waters of several tributaries of the Yukon, which here unwater the entire great area enclosed on one side by the Coast Ranges, and on the

by the Rocky Mountains. As the general direction of this line of watershed is transverse to that of the main orographic ridges of the country, it will probably be found, when traced in detail, to be very sinuous. The actual watershed, between the Liard and Pelly, but on our line of route, was found to have an elevation of 3,150 feet, but it is, no doubt, much lower in the central portion of the region between the Rocky Mountains and Coast Ranges.

To the north of the Stikine, at least one other river, the Taku, cuts like it completely across the Coast Ranges, but its basin is comparatively restricted and little is yet known of it.

It will be noticed that while the several branches of the Yukon conform in a general way to the main orographic axes, the Stikine and Liard appear to be to a large degree independent of these, and to flow counter to the direction of three mountain ranges.

The region as a whole, being a portion of the Cordillera belt of the west coast, is naturally mountainous in general character, but it comprises as well important areas of merely hilly or gently rolling country, besides many wide, flat-bottomed river valleys. It is, moreover, more mountainous and higher in its south-eastern part—that drained by the Stikine and Liard—and subsides gradually, and apparently uniformly, to the north-westward; the mountains at the same time becoming more isolated and being separated by broader tracts of low land. The general base level, or height of the main valleys, within the Coast Ranges, thus declines from about 2,500 feet to nearly 1,500 feet at the confluence of the Lewes and Pelly Rivers, and the average base level of the entire region may be stated as being a little over 2,000 feet.

Disregarding minor irregularities, it is found that the trend of the main mountain ridges and ranges shows throughout the entire region here described a general parallelism to the outline of the coast. In the south-eastern and more rugged tract, the bearing of such ranges as are well defined is north-west by south-east, while beyond a line which may be drawn between the head of Lynn Canal and Frances Lake the trend of the ranges to the north-westward changes to

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