

tains. A thick vegetable soil supports a luxuriant growth of grass, and groves of poplar are found, the growth of which is checked by the fires which occasionally sweep through the country. Although we are now 4000 feet above the sea at the foot of the mountains, the same plants that were noticeable in the Red River Valley reappear here, having been wanting in the intermediate country, while birch and coniferous trees are found in sheltered localities. The evidence points to the conclusion that the climate is much milder here than in the Red River Valley, and the actual experience of the settlers in Montana at the foot of the mountains, 300 miles further south, is that this fertile strip of country is well suited for the growth of cereals, and cattle can winter out. The mountain-streams abound in fish, and it was no uncommon thing for a man, during an afternoon's fishing with a rod and line and grasshopper-bait, to bring home a sackful of 3 lb. trout by the evening. The boundary-line passes through 20 miles of out-lying mountainous country, which can be avoided by a detour of a few miles to the north, to the foot of the great mountain barrier. The mountain ranges rise at once into precipitous peaks 4500 feet above the plain, and the mountain masses retreat north-westerly in successive ranges. The horizontal strata of the plains are suddenly broken by the crumpled rocks of the mountains, elevated by a great convulsion of nature. The limestone beds on the peaks and mountain ridges, are weathered into the most bold and rugged outline, while underneath are the sandstone beds of variegated colours.

In a cleft lying due south, Waterton or Chief Mountain Lake is enclosed, and by rafting on this lake access is obtained to the boundary-line in the heart of the mountains. The lake opens out northwards to the plain, and at its extremity is the western limit to which wheeled vehicles can be taken. A remarkable collection of mounds on the plains at the outlet of the lake was found by Mr. Dawson to be composed of moraine-matter, deposited by a great glacier, which must at one time have pushed northward down the valley of the lake and debouched on the plain.

For the concluding operation of the Commission in the mountain ravines, a train of pack-animals was organised, and the old trail of the Kootenay Indians was followed through the mountains over the dividing ridge at an altitude of 6700 feet above the sea; thence descending on the western side the surveying operations were continued into British Columbia and finally connected with the terminal point erected by the former Boundary Commission on the summit of the Rocky Mountains in 1861, being the eastern limit to which the boundary opera-