

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT.

TOPOGRAPHY.

General Account.

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The greater part of northern British Columbia and Yukon Territory may be broadly divided into three physiographic provinces which persist southeasterly through British Columbia, and to the westward through Alaska. Named in order from southwest to northeast, these provinces are: the Coastal system, the Interior system, and the Rocky Mountain system. These terranes constitute the Cordillera of northwestern North America, and follow in a general way the peculiar concave contour of the Pacific coast line. They thus all trend northwesterly through British Columbia, strike in a westerly direction through Alaska, and in Yukon, in between, they follow an intermediate course. Lying to the north, northeast, and east of the Rocky Mountain system are plains or lowland tracts: the Arctic Slope region, the Mackenzie lowlands, and the Great Plains (Diag. 2.).

The Yukon Plateau province constitutes the entire Interior system in Yukon and in northern British Columbia southward to about latitude 58°, whence for about four degrees of latitude the region is mountainous and consists, according to Dawson,¹ of disturbed Cretaceous rocks. Beyond this mountainous portion of the Interior system the surface gradually declines to the upland of the Interior plateau, which continues southeasterly to a point a few miles south of the 49th parallel.²

From about the 50th to near the 60th parallel, the coastal system embraces only the Coast range, if the islands to the west be considered to form part of a separate range,³ but the simplicity of this

¹ Dawson, G. M., "Geological record of the Rocky Mountain region in Canada"; Geol. Soc. of Amer., Vol. 12, p. 61.

² Daly, R. A., "The nomenclature of the North American cordillera between the 45th and 33rd parallels of latitude," Geog. Jour., June, 1906, p. 588.

³ Dawson has separated the Vancouver range from the Coast range. See Dawson, G. M., Trans. Royal Soc. of Can., 1890, Vol. 8, Sec. 4, p. 4. Geol. Soc. of Amer., Vol. 12, pp. 61, 62.