

on either hand, and all the way he will meet with only one or two small rapids to add a little excitement to the trip. He will not, however, venture into the rapids by which the river, emerging from the mountains, drops to the plain below; for in ten miles the river tumbles a thousand feet and is very grand and turbulent before it enters its narrow gorge and assumes a placidity befitting its name.

By using the steamers which the Hudson Bay Company within a few years has launched upon the Athabasca and Mackenzie Rivers, one may now travel from New York City to the Arctic Ocean along interior routes, carried all the way by steam except for about 335 miles. He will travel by rail to Calgary on the Canadian Pacific, thence 270 miles by waggon to Athabasca Landing, where he can take a steamer for over 200 miles to the Grand Rapids of the Athabasca River, where sixty miles of land portage are required. At Fort McMurray, the foot of the rapids, a steamer has been running for six years down the river to Lake Athabasca and into the Slave River, to the second and last obstruction, five rapids close together. Below these rapids another steamer has been plying for six years and there is no further interruption of navigation in the 1,037 miles down the great Mackenzie River to the sea.

In all this vast country from the Saskatchewan River to the Arctic Ocean our knowledge is confined chiefly to the rivers and the great lakes. Explorers, missionaries, and agents of the Hudson Bay Company know very little of the enormous areas stretching between the water-courses. The future will fill the maps with numberless details now wholly lacking; but in broad outline we know the characteristics of the country and they may be very briefly described.

Draw a line from near Cape Bathurst on the Arctic Ocean, almost exactly south-east to Fort Churchill on Hudson Bay. All the country east of this line is barren ground, utterly worthless, it is believed, save for its fish and furs. West of this line is a broad belt of country including all of Great Bear Lake and generally bounded on the west by the great chain of lakes extending from Great Slave Lake to Lake Winnipeg. This is the wooded belt of the Canadian North-West, containing much spruce, tamarack, and sub-arctic trees, a rocky and swampy area with some regions of good land.

Between this region and the Rocky Mountains is a great belt quite narrow in its northern part along the Middle Mackenzie but very broad at its southern limit, the northern branch of the Saskatchewan. This is an area of great plains with considerable timber, and a large extent of the country some day may be valuable for pasture. Then south of the North Saskatchewan, extending from the Red River valley to the Rocky Mountains, is a land of prairie and plain, one of the finest wheat growing and grazing countries in the world. The general characteristics of most of British Columbia are those of the wooded belt above referred to, and here and there all over the country between the lakes and the Pacific have been found riches in the shape of petroleum, coal, and gold which have developed into or bid fair to become large sources of wealth.

It really is amusing to see the changes that Canada's surveyors and explorers have been making in the maps of twenty years ago. They have been finding new water-ways and changing the courses of the old ones. They have whittled off parts of that wonderful system of lakes and added other parts which once figured as dry land. Within the past three years, Dawson and others have made a running survey of over 100,000 square miles of territory along the head streams of the Yukon, hitherto a *terra incognita*, and Ogilvie's conclusion that the gold diggings on the Yukon are in Canadian instead of Alaskan territory was interesting reading and hastened the sending of an expedition which is now locating the 141st meridian, the international boundary line.

We cannot describe here the many notable explorations recently carried out by the Canadian Geological and Land Departments; their studies in the region between Hudson Bay and Lake Winnipeg, showing the useless-