

the country generally examined are upon a very small scale, and that upon such maps no vast areas yet remain upon which rivers, lakes, mountains or other features are not depicted. If, however, we take the trouble to enquire more closely into this, and consult perhaps one of the geographers whose name may appear on the face of the map which we have examined, asking such awkward questions as may occur to us on the sources of information for this region or that, we may probably by him be referred to another and older map, and so on till we find in the end that the whole topographical fabric of large parts of all these maps rests upon information of the vaguest kind.

Of most of the large areas marked upon the map here shown, this is absolutely true, and the interests of knowledge with respect to these would be better subserved if such areas were left entirely blank, or, at least, if all the geographical features drawn upon them appeared in broken lines, in such a way as to show that none of them are certain. In other regions, the main geographical outlines, such as the courses of the larger rivers, are indicated approximately, with such accuracy as may be possible from accounts or itineraries derived from travellers or from officers of the Hudson Bay Company; or from the descriptions or rough sketches of Indians or other persons by whom the region has been traversed, but who have been unprovided with instruments of any kind and whose knowledge of the country has been incidentally obtained.

There is, in the case of such partially explored regions, more excuse for the delineation of the main features on our maps, as these may be useful in imparting general information of a more or less inexact kind. We can scarcely, however, admit that such regions have been explored in any true sense of that term, while they are certainly unsurveyed, and very little confidence can be placed in maps of this kind as guides in travel. When, ten years ago, I struck across from Fort McLeod, on the west side of the Rocky Mountains, with the purpose of reaching Fort Dunvegan on the Peace, through a country densely forested and without trails or tracks of any kind, I had so much confidence in the existing maps of that region as to assume that Dunvegan was at least approximately correct in position on them. As often as possible I took observations for latitude, and each night