

of the greatest rivers in the world, its course being two thousand five hundred miles from its source in the Rocky Mountains to its debouch in the Arctic Ocean. It is navigable for about twelve hundred miles, thus affording easy access in the summer months, from the Arctic Sea, and from the North Pacific by Bhering's Straits, to the interior of the North West Territory. It flows through a fertile and finely wooded country skirted by metalliferous hills. According to the best computation, it drains an area of 443,000 geographical square miles.

The Elk and Peace rivers, although great and beautiful streams, are only tributaries of the MacKenzie.

The Coppermine* and the great Fish river also discharge their waters into the Arctic Ocean. The former abounds in copper ore and galena. On the banks of the latter, it is credibly said that there is excellent grazing.† Next comes the Churchill river which flows from the interior of the country, across the granitic belt, to Hudson's Bay.

The Saskatchewan with its two branches arising in the Rocky Mountains, drains an area of 363,000 square miles. The Red river and the Assiniboine flowing from the heights near the sources of the Missouri and the Mississippi, add immensely to the waters of Lake Winnipeg and thence find their way by the Nelson river to Hudson's Bay.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

There is admirable unity in the geological appearances of this vast territory. By nature it has been made one land, however much it may hereafter be divided by the policy of man. The great chain of the Rocky Mountains extends from its southern to its northern boundary, rising at its highest elevation, to the height of sixteen thousand feet above the level of the ocean.‡ Parallel with these, to the west, rise the Blue and Cascade Mountains, as if intended for a van-guard towards the waves of the Pacific. From the base of the Rocky Mountains, eastward, the country is a gently sloping plain for 800 or 900 miles, to the commencement of the great Crystalline Belt, which tak-

* "Taking the lines of those rivers," says Dr. King, "I have always understood the Coppermine river and others to be very rich in galena. The Coppermine river is very rich in copper. Coal and galena were also found along the whole line of that coast." "That is on the Arctic Sea?" enquired Mr. Edward Ellice. "Yes; still it is within the Hudson's Bay Company's territory as far as the MacKenzie." Mr. Christy then asked: "You did not hear of the Company having developed these resources at all?" "Not in the slightest degree." (Report of Committee House of Commons on the Hudson Bay Company, 1857. Evidence of R. King, Esq., M. D., p. 316.)

† "The whole of the great Fish river down to the Polar Sea, is the finest grazing country in the world as far as grazing is concerned. Of course it is alluvial soil based upon sand, and therefore, not an arable land." "What would be the climate there?" "The climate there of course would interfere very largely with it; but still, comparing it with Northern Europe, it has all the facilities of the Northern parts there." (Same report,—evidence of R. King, Esq., M. D., page 314.)

‡ The highest mountain in the Territory and, indeed, in all North America, is MOUNT SAINT ELIAS, which does not form a portion of the Rocky Mountain chain, being an isolated mountain, situated near the confines of what was, until recently, Russian America. It attains the height of 17,860 feet.