

A Geological Reconnaissance between Golden and Kamloops, B.C., along the Canadian Pacific Railway.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL TOPOGRAPHY.

The Canadian Cordillera is divisible into four major provinces: (a) the Coastal Mountain system, including the Vancouver range and the Coast range; (b) the Belt of Interior Plateaus; (c) the Middle or Interior Mountain group, including the Columbia, Selkirk, and Purcell ranges; and (d) the Rocky Mountain system (Map No. 1458). The basis of this subdivision and naming is described in Chapter III of Memoir No. 38 of this Survey. Dawson's pioneer statement was there enlarged and otherwise changed in order to meet the necessities of systematic work along the 49th parallel section. The constituent mountain systems are separated from one another, with some rigour, by structural depressions and erosion troughs. In the area covered by this reconnaissance the systems concerned are the Rocky, Purcell, Selkirk, and Columbia mountains, and the Belt of Interior Plateaus. The dividing depressions are: the Rocky Mountain trench, the Purcell trench, and the "Selkirk Valley" (namely, that part of the Columbia valley that lies west of the Selkirk range).

In general the Rocky mountains are separated from the northern Purcells and Selkirks by the Rocky Mountain trench, which is drained by the Columbia river (Plate I). On a very small scale map of the Cordillera there would be difficulty in showing any deviation of that river from the main axis of the trench. However, the river does leave that axis at a point near Donald and runs for a distance of nearly 20 miles behind the long, narrow mountain block overlooking Beavermouth on