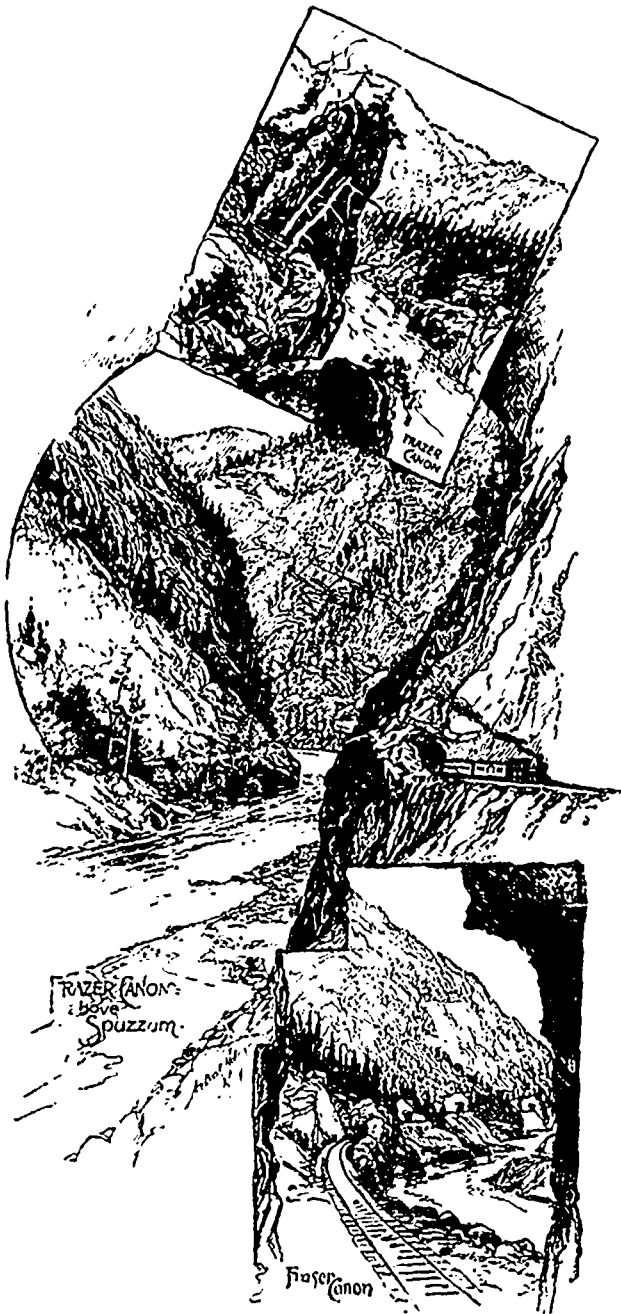




THE GREAT HIGHWAY OF CANADA.

IN an old number of the *Century Magazine* (April, 1886) is an article on Canada and the Canadian Pacific Railway, from which we quote a few passages, as applicable now as when they were written:

"Within a few short years there has sprung into existence in Canada one of the greatest railway systems in the world, extending from the tide-waters of the Atlantic to the tide-waters of

the Pacific, with a continuous main line of 3,050 miles, and with arms reaching out in all directions—the Canadian Pacific. The newborn Colossus of the North has grown so quickly and quietly that few of us are as yet aware of its existence. We have so long been accustomed to seeing Canada figuring on our maps as a narrow strip along their upper margin that it is difficult to realize the fact of a nation north of us with a domain vastly larger than all the United States.

Our misconceptions of the climate of Canada are as far from the truth as our ideas of her political strength, her extent, and material development. As a matter of fact, the climate is not distinguishable from that of the adjacent states in our own line, while that of British Columbia closely resembles England.

Into the Province of British Columbia are packed together, in half a dozen stupendous ranks, separated by narrow valleys, all the mountain ranges in Western America. We cross in succession the Rockies, the Selkirks, the Gold, Okiraton, and Coast ranges by a route six hundred and fifty miles in length, although the breadth, measured in a straight line, hardly exceeds four hundred miles; and during the whole time are in the midst of snow-crowned monarchs.

The extent, distinctness, and variety of Alpine scenery visible from the railway trains are beyond adequate portrayal and comparison. The line enters the mountains upon the east by ascending the Bow River, about one hundred and fifty miles north of the boundary, to its sources amid the summits of the main range; after passing which, it is led by a marvel of engineering down along the cataracts of the Kicking Horse to the Columbia. The railway does not follow that queenly river in its detour to the northward, however, but climbs straight over the Selkirks and succeeding barriers, until it has descended to the Fraser and threaded its canyon to the ocean.

Here, then, are six hundred and fifty miles of mountains heaped against and over one another in Titanic masses, ever present to the traveller and ever changing in aspect—a great "sea of mountains" that can be likened to no other on the earth. Rising more than two miles above the sea, the mountains are cleft to their base by the passes followed by the railway, and their whole dizzy height is seen at once. Far up on their shoulders, in full view from the train, rest many glaciers, by the side of which those of the