

THE PEEL RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

INTRODUCTION.

The field work assigned to me for the season of 1905 embraced a geologic and topographic reconnaissance of the Peel river in the extreme northwestern portion of the Dominion. Owing to the shortness of the season in that part, and the difficulty and length of time required to get in and out of the region, an early start from Ottawa was very necessary. In accordance, therefore, with instructions received from Dr. Bell, I left Ottawa about the middle of March for Winnipeg. Here some supplies were purchased and shipped by the Hudson's Bay Company to meet me at Fort McPherson in August, and later I proceeded to Dawson, where I arrived on the 1st of April.

At Dawson the interval between the closing of winter travel and the opening of navigation on the streams was consumed in the testing and correction of instruments, and in visiting and examining the placer mines of the Klondike creeks; and during this period we were much indebted to Mr. J. B. Tyrrell for his kindness and hospitality in allowing us the use of his house. To Major Z. T. Wood also, Commandant of the North-west Mounted Police in the Yukon, are my thanks due for his kindly assistance in the selection of canoeemen and the loan of a canoe.

On May 22, the party, consisting of six men and three canoes, left Dawson by the ss. *Prospector* for Frazer falls on the Stewart river. Four days were consumed in reaching this point. Another delay, occasioned by an early rise of water in the Stewart river, prevented us from moving until June 5. When we began our journey at this date, it was only with the greatest difficulty and some danger that any progress could be made. With the water fifteen or twenty feet higher than its normal stage the velocity of the current is greatly increased, quantities of driftwood are being carried down stream, and in many places the banks are completely submerged. Under these conditions we were eight days in getting as far as Lansing river, a distance of eighty miles.

Above this river the water was at a much better stage and the traveling was easier, until we came within twenty-five miles of the mouth of Braine creek. In this portion of the Beaver river, a northern tributary of the Stewart, the stream is split up into several channels and is filled with gravel bars, while the grade is greatly increased, so that considerable difficulties were again encountered in making progress. At the