

the occurrence of those insects at the junction of the Clear-water and the Athabasca, though I only found them at that spot.

The wapiti has become rather uncommon in the forests of the Athabasca, but the moose is frequently met with there. I have never travelled along this noble river (and I have done so six times) without seeing it, sometimes as many as three individuals together. The frugivorous black bear, lynx, beaver, and otter are common. On June 23rd, 1879, I met two Cree hunters who declared that since the spring (i. e. in less than three months) they had between them killed along the river 200 beavers, 25 moose, 20 bears, and five wapiti; and I may add that from experience of the Redskins I know they are more given to diminish than to exaggerate the results of their hunting. This shows that life could still be maintained on the river if there existed inhabitants able to hunt and provision the trading posts. But from the drainage of the Lesser Slave Lake to Lake Athabasca, there are but 31 Crees and 22 Chipewyans, women and children all told.

The original mouth of the Athabasca is now distant a good day's navigation from the lake. It is shown by the simultaneous receding of both the high strands forming the bed of the river, which from this point keep widening away from each other until they disappear in the interior. A flat uniform plain follows, composed of accumulations of soil with no mixture of rock and covered by dense forest growth. The river has thus actually filled up its own ancient estuary with the material it has carried along, for no other in the world is more loaded with muddy deposits, vegetable detritus, and floating trees.

Almost immediately after this, the river divides into two arms, of which only the right-hand one retains the name of Athabasca, the left taking that of Embarras, because of the frequent bars made across it by the timber borne on its waters. Further on, the Athabasca channel is subdivided into three other branches, of which the central was the principal channel in 1879, whilst the left one, known as the Brochets (or Pike) River, rejoined the Embarras branch. But all these channels are interconnected by a multitude of creeks, not reckoned by the natives, as they are only navigable by bark canoes.

Some maps make the river Athabasca communicate with Lake Mamawi (or Mamawa), which is also represented as an expansion of one of the mouths of the Peace River; but this is a double error. Lake Mamawi (meaning in Cree, Reunion or Assemblage) receives its waters from Clear Lake, with which it communicates by a very short arm called the Hay River ("Klopè-ǰjiéthé"); and Clear Lake itself is fed from Bark Mountain, having no connection with the Peace River. But before entering Mamawi, the waters of Clear Lake bifurcate, the left channel discharging under the name of the "Des Enfants" or Children River, into the most eastern mouth of the Peace River, called "Aux Œufs" or Egg River, which flows into Lake Athabasca.