

much obstructed by fallen timber. The summit of this pass he considers to be less elevated than any other yet examined, but in approaching it from the east by the valley of the North Saskatchewan he had to travel over shingle flats that are flooded in spring, the channel being bounded on either hand by lofty and thickly-wooded precipices. No appreciable ascent was made, nor any decided ridge crossed, to reach the source of the stream, along which he descended, through a narrow and tortuous valley for about 20 miles, to reach the Columbia in lat. $51^{\circ} 30' N$.

The Columbia at this point flows to the N.W., through a valley several miles in width, with rocky and mountainous country on either side. In that direction, however, the country appeared more open, and were it not for the dense woods might have been easily traversed. The river itself is already of large size, with a sluggish current, and continues so for the whole distance to its source at the Upper Columbia Lakes.

Not having succeeded in his attempt to proceed due west, Dr. Hector retraced his steps to the Kootanie River, and following down the ordinary trail rejoined us at Colville at the end of October.

At Fort Colville I had the means of provisioning men and procuring horses. I therefore determined that we should retrace our steps to the northward of the boundary line in order to carry out, if possible, the object of establishing a line of communication across the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific without crossing the boundary of the United States.

With this object in view I directed Mr. Sullivan to proceed with a small party of men and horses to Fort Shepherd, and thence pursue his way to the north-east in the hope of completing a junction with the Kananaskis pass, and I likewise started with a small party of men and horses to Fort Shepherd, intending thence to pursue my way to the westward.

These two branch explorations were finally successful, though only after very hard labour. Mr. Sullivan, who was obliged to send the horses back on account of the obstruction presented by fallen timber, proceeded on foot accompanied by Indians. All had to carry their provisions with them, for generally speaking there is very little game in the country, and consequently little or no food save on the lakes and rivers.

During my branch exploration by the westward, I was accompanied by an Indian and a half breed, and in addition to the fallen timber I encountered almost insuperable difficulties in the mountainous nature of the country westward of the Columbia River, and although I succeeded in forcing my way and taking the horses across from Fort Shepherd to the place where I met the American Commission upon the boundary line in long. 119° , yet I could not recommend that line of country as one through which it would be advisable to carry a road. Besides, the lateness of the season did not admit of my crossing the Cascade Range, otherwise I should myself have crossed the continent altogether in an unbroken line from Canada to the shores of the Pacific.

Here I met the gentlemen employed under the American Commissioners for laying down the boundary line from the Gulf of Georgia, near the Little Okanagan Lakes, from which point the Hudson Bay Company's trail passes north of the boundary line, altogether crossing the Cascade Range at Mansen's Mountain.

This Hudson Bay trail, which is used for bringing in supplies to Colville from Fort Langley (on the west coast) crosses the boundary line for the first time on the lesser Okanagan Lakes in long. $119^{\circ} 10' W$. Being already aware of this fact, and being subsequently confirmed in this opinion by Lieut. Palmer, R.E., who made a reconnaissance of the Hudson Bay Company's trail all the way from Fraser River to Fort Colville, I did not think it necessary or justifiable to cross the Cascade Range so late in the season, and to run the risk of losing the horses without obtaining any further knowledge with regard to this old established trail beyond that already known to the Hudson Bay Company, and already supplied to Her Majesty's Government by Lieut. Palmer, R.E.

The connexion therefore of the Saskatchewan plains, east of the Rocky Mountains, with a known route through British Columbia, has been effected by the Expedition under my command, without our having been under the necessity of passing through any portion of United States Territory. Still the knowledge of the country on the whole would never lead me to advocate a line of communication from Canada across the continent to the Pacific, exclusively through British territory. The time has now for ever gone by for effecting such an object, and the unfortunate choice of an astronomical boundary line has completely isolated the Central American possessions of Great Britain from Canada in the east, and also almost debarred them from any eligible access from the Pacific coast on the west.

The settler, who will always adopt the shortest and least expensive route, will undoubtedly follow the line of traverse indicated by the formation of the country.