

and south, and the great connections east and west. To facilitate the investigation of this whole subject, I have had prepared a map on a large scale, giving the entire northern portion of the continent from the parallel of San Francisco and Washington city to Hudson's bay. On this map I have exhibited the mountain ranges, the great navigable streams, the practicable passes and the principal prairie regions. Looking on that map, your attention is arrested first by the great mountain chain from which flow waters to either ocean. Following those waters, you observe great rivers having long, distant courses before they reach the Gulf of Mexico, Hudson's bay, the Frozen ocean, and the Pacific ocean. Observe especially those two great rivers, the Missouri and the Columbia; follow them up to their upper tributaries, and you will find that they interlock in the very heart of the Rocky mountains. You will find that from the head of steamboat navigation of the one river, to the head of steamboat navigation on the other, the distance is but inconsiderable compared with the entire distance across the continent. There is Fort Benton, 2,415 miles above St. Louis. To this point you can take steamers seven months in the year, carrying 150 tons of freight, and here at the mouth of the Palouse, on the great southern tributary of the Columbia, Snake river, you come again to waters navigable by steamers. The distance from the head of steamboat navigation on the Missouri, to the head of steamboat navigation on the Columbia, is but 450 miles.

There are other streams, second only in importance to the Missouri. The two branches of the Saskatchewan, that have their sources also in the Rocky mountains, north of the Missouri, stretch a great distance eastward to Lake Winnipeg, and find their way northward into Hudson's bay. They connect also with the main Columbia itself, affording transit for passengers and freight many months of the year: and thus the Columbia river and the two