

great tufts of harebells made tempting mouthfuls for the ponies as they jogged over the elastic turf, happy to be on level ground once more.

The scenery is admirable, combining the beauty of the prairie with grand mountain forms, the more distant ones white with snow and glaciers. One splendid peak, projecting into the plains on the north of the river, is formed of a great anticlinal fold, an unusual structure in the eastern Rockies, where the prevailing type is of tilted blocks. As this mountain commands views up or down five long valleys, we named it Sentinel mountain. Skulls of buffalo and their numerous trails and wallows, show that the Kootenay plains were once a favourite feeding-ground for these almost extinct animals. According to the Stony Indians, snow never lies here in winter, from the frequent Chinook winds.

The route we had followed thus far is the usual road of the Mountain Stonies toward their more northern hunting-grounds, and has often been traversed by white men. The trail here divides up, one branch turning up-river to Howse pass, by which the Columbia may be reached; * another down the Saskatchewan toward the plains and Edmonton. The river is already a powerful stream here at its exit from the mountains. In 1892 we found it just fordable for ponies at a point where gravel islands divide it into six channels. Last summer, however, all the rivers were high from the unusually heavy snows of the previous winter, and we found the Saskatchewan quite unfordable, as chief Jonas and other Indians had forewarned us. We went down-stream till the river flowed in a single channel, swam the horses over, and ferried our stuff with a canvas boat we had brought for such purposes.

From this point onwards to the Athabasca pass is practically virgin ground. Though a few prospectors have followed up some of the northern tributaries of the Saskatchewan, there is, so far as I am aware, no printed record of their journeys. The route followed by Earl Southesk † was probably farther to the east, since we could not fit his map and descriptions to the region through which we travelled. Palliser's map proved quite useless. In the previous summer our Indian guides had led us quite astray, taking us out into the foothills and through wretched muskeg trails to the Brazeau. Here we took matters into our own hands, and followed up this river into the mountains again. On our way home we followed a wild pass up Job's creek, and down Rock creek to the Kootenay plains. Last summer we took a more direct route which my brother had used the year before, following up the Hahasigi-wapta, or Cataract river, as the Stony name may be

* See Mr. Sandford Fleming's 'Expeditions to the Pacific,' in the *Roy. Soc. Can. Journals*, 1889, Sec. II. p. 89, etc.; also Dr. Hector's report in Captain Palliser's 'Exploration in British America.'

† 'Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains.'