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drain an area of about 10,000 miles only. The total area of prairie country between the same limits, including that of all three steppes, may be estimated at 192,000 square miles. Though much of this vast area is not absolutely treeless like its south-western part, the aggregate treeclad area is quite insignificant as compared with that of the open plains.

From the western edge of the great plains to the Pacific, between the 49th and 56th parallels, the Cordillera belt of the west coast has an average breadth of about 400 miles. Geologically, it may be considered throughout as a region of flexure and turmoil, and orographically, as one of mountains. As compared with its development in the Western States, the Cordillera belt may here be considered as constricted and narrow. To the north of the 56th parallel it is very imperfectly known topographically and almost completely unexplored geologically. It appears probable, however, that a wide bay of comparatively undisturbed Cretaceous rocks may penetrate it in the region of the upper Liard River, which the eschelon range bordering the lower part of this stream and the Mackenzie may bound to the east. A southern prolongation of such a range, beneath the newer rocks, may probably be indicated by the remarkable parallel flexures of the great rivers of the northern plains, the Liard, Peace, Athabasca and Saskatchewan.

Between the 49th and 56th degrees of latitude the Cordillera belt is composed of four great ranges, the Rocky, the Gold, the Coast and the Vancouver Mountains, which are in the main nearly parallel and run in north-west and south-east bearings.

In its southern part, the Rocky Mountain range has, an average breadth of about sixty miles, which decreases near the Peace River to forty miles or less. Near the 49th parallel several summits occur with elevations exceeding 10,000 feet, but northward few attain this elevation till the vicinity of the Bow River and Kicking Horse is reached. About the head waters of the North Saskatchewan the range appears to culminate, and Mount Murchison is credited with an altitude of 13,500 feet, though this has not been accurately determined. Near the Peace few summits exceed 6,000, so far as known, though more or less extensive snow-fields occur in many places, true glaciers appear only about the head waters of the Bow, North Saskatchewan and Athabasca. Wherever the line of junction has been closely examined, great faults with eastward downthrow separate the Mesozoic rocks of the eastern foot-hills from the palæozoic of the mountains, and other similar dislocations occur in the heart of the range parallel to its general course. With the exception of a single small area above Jasper House, reported by Dr. Hector, no crystalline schists have been found in this