

The western mountainous district, known throughout the eastern portion of the country from Pennsylvania to Alabama as the *Appalachian Region*, culminates in North Carolina in a series of ranges that reach over 6,000 feet in altitude. Kerr, in describing this region, says:

"The western section is a rugged mountainous plateau; it forms a narrow, irregular, much indented trough, lying between the bifurcating chains of the western and dominant arm of the southern prolongation of the Appalachians—the Smoky Mountains and the Blue Ridge—the former being the western boundary of the State. The length of this plateau from northeast to southwest is more than 200 miles, its breadth 15 to 50 miles, and its area nearly 6,000 square miles. The Smoky chain has a general elevation of from 5,000 to 6,000 feet, rising in many summits to 6,500 feet and upwards, but is broken down by half a dozen deepwater gaps or cañons to the level of 2,000 and even 1,200 feet. The Blue Ridge, which constitutes the eastern boundary of the plateau, is a very sinuous and angular and straggling mountain chain, with a general elevation of from 3,000 to 4,000 feet and upwards, a few of its higher summits, about midway in the State, reaching nearly 6,000 feet.

"These two bounding chains are connected by many north and south cross-chains, of equal elevation with themselves, or greater, and separated by deep valleys. On one of these cross-chains, called the Black Mountains, is Mitchell's Peak, the highest point east of the Mississippi, its altitude being 6,711 feet (400 feet above Mount Washington in New Hampshire). The cross-valleys or river basins have an altitude of from 2,000 to 3,000 feet, with smaller benches and marginal plateaus of from 3,500 to 4,000 feet. Seen from the east or Atlantic side, the Blue Ridge appears as a steep, ragged, and broken escarpment, springing suddenly 2,000 to 3,000 feet above the Piedmont Plateau at its base."

The central hill country known as the *Piedmont Plateau* attains a much greater width in North Carolina than in the States to the north of it, and is also far more rugged. Kerr, in describing this area, says:

"This plateau has along its western margin an altitude of 1,200 to 1,500 feet above sea-level, and is mountainous, with high and precipitous spurs projected eastward and southward from the Blue Ridge. A few of these extend in irregular, straggling ranges all across the breadth of the Piedmont section, which is 60 to 75 miles wide, and carries an elevation of 1,000 feet to its eastern margin.

"This middle region of the State is a country of hills and valleys and rolling uplands, its prominent topographical features being a succession of broad-backed swells with eastward or southeastward trends, constituting the watersheds between a number of large rivers, which take their rise in the Piedmont or on the flanks of the Blue Ridge, and reach the Atlantic through a system of wide valleys, 300 to 500 feet below the intervening divides. The area of this region is about 20,000 square miles; its altitude, descending gradually from 1,000 to about 200 feet, averages about 650 feet."

The eastern low country, known as the *Coastal Plain*, extends from Cape Cod and the islands off the New England coast as a constantly widening belt to the Gulf. Along its western margin in North Caro-