

THE COASTAL PLAIN STREAMS AND VALLEYS.

The Rivers and Creeks.—The Coastal Plain rivers consist of two types: first, those which rise in the Piedmont Plateau and cross the Coastal Plain on their way to the sea, and, second, those which rise in the Coastal Plain itself. In the first group belong the largest rivers of the district: the Roanoke and Chowan in the north, which have their sources in the Piedmont Plateau of Virginia; the Tar and Neuse of the central area, which rise in the eastern portion of the North Carolina Piedmont, and the Cape Fear River of the south, which has its source somewhat farther westward. Several important South Carolina rivers also have their sources in North Carolina; the Peedee, known as the Yadkin in its upper portions, and the Santee, which receives the waters of both the Catawba and the Broad rivers. All of these streams rise in the western portion of the North Carolina Piedmont, receiving their waters in part from the eastern flanks of the Appalachian Region.

Throughout the Coastal Plain are numerous small rivers and creeks as well as the lower tributaries of the big streams which have their source within the Coastal Plain itself. They are scattered throughout the district and do not need to be considered in detail in this connection.

The large rivers are tidal only in their lower courses, although they are for the most part navigable almost to the Piedmont border. The smaller streams flow generally with rather rapid currents, except near their mouths and throughout much of the low eastern district, where they, too, are tidal. Some of the tributary streams draining the higher terraces of the Coastal Plain have rapid currents, and where they have cut through the deposits of the Coastal Plain to the crystalline rocks of the Piedmont have all the essential characteristics of Piedmont streams.

The Valleys.—The valleys of the Coastal Plain district of North Carolina are not simple trenches cut out of the broad upland surface that forms the interstream areas. They have had in most instances a complicated history since they were formed during the extensive post-Lafayette emergence, which in North Carolina, as elsewhere, produced the greater river channels and conditioned the chief Coastal Plain drainage systems of the present day. During subsequent oscillations the submergence of these valleys took place and the development of the same terraces here as in the other areas went on. Each succeeding terrace-forming period left its impress on the valley topography, although all trace of the older terrace was often obliterated in the stream valley during the succeeding period of emergence.

The reëntrant valleys of the smaller streams also afford much interesting data for an interpretation of Coastal Plain history. While the