

## THE GOLD FIELDS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

It would be difficult to indicate any defined section of British Columbia in which gold has not been, or will not be, found. The first mines discovered were in the southern part of the province, the next in the Cariboo district, in the centre of British Columbia, and at the present the richest diggings in work are the Cassiar mines in the far north. Recently several new mines have been opened elsewhere.

— Gold has been found on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains, on Queen Charlotte islands at the extreme west, and on every range of mountains that intervene between these two extreme points. Hitherto the work has been practically placer mining, a mere scratching of the surface, yet nearly fifty millions of dollars have been scraped out of the rivers and creeks. Bars have been washed out and abandoned, without sufficient effort being made to discover the quartz vein from which the streams received their gold. Abandoned diggings have been visited after a lapse of years, and new discoveries made in the neighbourhood.

The railway now pierces the auriferous ranges: men and material can be carried into the heart of the mountains, and with each succeeding season fresh gold deposits will be found, or the old ones traced to the quartz rock, and capital and adequate machinery be brought to bear upon them. There are hundreds of miles open to the poor prospector, and there are, or shortly will be, numerous openings for the capitalist. To the agricultural settler the existence of gold is of double significance. He is certain of a market for his produce, he is not debarred from mining a little on his own account, and he is never deprived of the hope that he will one day become the fortunate discoverer of a bonanza.

In giving evidence before a committee of the House of Commons a member of the Government Geological Survey said: "After having travelled over 1,000 miles through British Columbia, I can say with safety that there will yet be taken out of her mines wealth enough to build the Pacific Railway." This means many millions. Another gentleman in the same service said that, "it may soon take its place as second to no other country in North America."

In 1860 Antler Creek (on the Fraser) yielded at one time not less than \$10,000 per day. On one claim \$1,000 was obtained by a single day's work.

The total output of gold since its first discovery in British Columbia, even before new mineral districts were opened up by the Canadian Pacific Railway, was estimated at \$60,000,000. It is now far in excess of this. With present facilities for prospecting, much heavier returns are expected, for the era of scientific mining in British Columbia has only commenced.

## GOLD-BEARING ROCKS.

In British Columbia, a belt of rocks probably corresponding to the gold rocks of California, has already been proved to be richly auriferous. Geological explorations go to show a general resemblance of the rocks to those of the typical sections of California and the Western States.

Silver has been discovered in several places, and its further discovery will probably show that it follows the same rules as in Nevada and Colorado. The best known argentiferous locality is that about six miles from Hope, on the Fraser River. The lodes occur at an elevation of about 5,000 feet.