

only, and it will shortly be possible for people to enjoy life in an unrivaled climate with scenery not to be surpassed in any other part of the world, to have prosperous mines all round them and a plentiful supply of fruit and vegetables grown on the spot; nor does this list of resources include all the advantages Vernon enjoys, as the city can boast of a flour mill, a saw mill and sash and door factory, a creamery that will commence work next spring, and a good brewery in operation. All these, with our railroad and steam communication to the end of Okanagan Lake to Penticton, from which point good waggon roads connect with the mining camps of Fairview, Greenwood, Camp McKinney, Boundary Creek and on to Midway, all soon to be connected with the Kootenay by rail. Surely these advantages should not be overlooked by would-be immigrants.

F. ADRIAN MEYER.

OMINECA NOTES.

NOW that the Yukon is claiming the attention of many thousands of prospectors and miners, and excitement is at its height anent the rich discoveries in that country, people are apt to treat mining news from other districts somewhat contemptuously. Nevertheless, the progress of development of Omineca and that section in the vicinity of Skeena should also excite interest, and I propose here to briefly describe the work that is there being carried on.

Under the capable management of Col. Wright, of the Forty-Third Mining and Milling Company, preparations are going forward on the company's property at Manson Creek for next year's washing. Upwards of sixty men are employed on the claim, and the prevailing opinion is that the shareholders will receive a most satisfactory dividend from the next clean up.

At Tom's Creek Messrs. Lyons and May, owning the Mayflower placer claim—a very promising property—are at present drifting and have now seven feet of pay dirt which prospects from ten to fifty cents to the pan.

A party of Chinamen on Vital Creek are apparently doing well, and as near as could be ascertained, each man's share was \$800 as the result of clean-ups for five weeks' work. Chinamen are generally reticent—and these were no exception to the rule—regarding their gains, but from one of the partners it was learned that the above-mentioned sum was not over-estimated. The claim was formerly owned by James May, of Tom's Creek, and sold by him to the present owners for \$1,000.

Alex. Fraser, well-known in Victoria, was, when seen by the present scribe, rather down on his luck. He is working on Silver Creek, a tributary of the Omineca at Kiskagasse, on the Skeena, sixty miles from Hazelton. A number of claims have recently been located in this neighbourhood and a good deal of development work (in most cases the result being encouraging) has been prosecuted this season. Among the more developed properties are the Milburn, E. C. Stephenson, Hick Largent, Diamond Jubilee and Standard, all of which were located and are owned by the Hazelton Prospecting Company.

Practically little quartz prospecting has been attempted in the Omineca, owing to the absence of

transportation and smelting facilities, but there can be little doubt that rich mines will one day be operated at Kiskagasse, when claims that have been opened up to a limited extent show up well. Two properties, the Alexander and the M.E.O. in particular, are worthy of mention. Both have leads of boronite carrying high copper, gold and silver values.

There yet remains at the headwaters of the Finlay River a vast country, as yet unexplored, and as gold is found in paying quantities on the lower bars of this river, it is reasonable to believe that there is rich placer above. I would certainly advise prospectors to visit and explore this section and who can say we may not have here a gold area not less rich than Klondyke itself? J.

THE PROGRESS OF SIX MONTHS—A VISIT TO MINING TOWNS OF YALE AND WEST KOOTENAY.

ONE'S first impressions of Ashcroft are likely to be prejudiced for the east-bound train deposits you at the ill lighted station at some unholy time in the middle of the night, and you stand and shiver (particularly when the month is October), until some one finds time to direct you to an hotel, whereat you arrive in a state of mind at the best strictly critical. The local hotel service might possibly be improved. But in the morning, with the sun shining brightly, Ashcroft is decidedly an interesting spot, and the first thing that strikes one is the cleanliness of the streets. I saw several men employed raking up refuse during my stay, and upon enquiry elicited the information that whenever the town began to look untidy some one would take round the hat and collect enough money to make things ship-shape again. Ashcroft is at the present time the distributing point for Cariboo and other districts, and teams may be seen almost every day leaving for the long and tedious journey to Quesnelle and Barkerville. Teaming over the Cariboo road is a poor business; competition has reduced the rates, and taking into consideration the hardships of the life, the teamster's, like the policeman's lot is not a happy one.

About eighteen miles from Ashcroft, on Bonaparte Creek, some very fair quartz claims are being developed. Of these the Maggie, with ore assaying \$35, and the Rivers mine group, owned by the B.C. Development Company, are showing up exceedingly well. But Ashcroft looks forward to very prosperous times next spring, when it is hoped it will become a starting point for the Klondyke gold fields, the route thence being, from local accounts, comparatively easy; but in order to supply enquirers with really reliable information regarding its feasibility, a number of enterprising people of the town, including Dr. Reynolds, editor of the local paper, a few weeks back, engaged a party to travel over the route and to report their experiences. The agents received instructions to journey by the Cariboo road to Quesnelle, a distance of 220 miles, and crossing the Fraser River there, proceed to Hazelton and from Hazelton by trail, (of which there are two) to Telegraph Creek; from here to Lake Teslin, the distance from Quesnelle being approximately 620 miles. Enquiries regarding this route are received almost every day at Ashcroft, and shortly after my visit a party arrived from Spokane (I think) with the mad intention of setting out, but it is needless to say they were speedily disillusioned when they were told that the snow was already six inches deep at "83-Mile." April, of course, is the earliest time possible to start by this route, and perhaps even April is too early.

Journeying by freight train is not the most comfortable mode of railway travel, but the writer preferred that method of going from Ashcroft to Kamloops as it landed him at his destination at noon in place of getting there on the passenger train at 3 a. m.

The trip is a most interesting and enjoyable one through scenery which the traveller, on ordinary occasions, has no opportunity of seeing unless his train is many hours behind time.

Situated at the junction of the north and south branches of the Thompson River, Kamloops is a substantially-built town, containing a number of good stores, many neat residences with trim lawns and well-kept flower beds, and several rather indifferent hotels. This latter shortcoming is in a fair way of being speedily remedied as a new hotel, of brick and stone, is in course of erection.

Scattered here and there in the valleys of the two rivers, as