

MINERAL RESOURCES OF THE PROVINCE.

I think I have now, in a few words, explained why the position of British Columbia, with its natural resources, makes it a desirable country. Referring more particularly to these resources, probably at the head of the list I should place its minerals. What they are may be judged by the fact that already, after only a few years' development, its mineral production in 1901, apart from coal, was some \$14,669,000, whilst in 1898 it was only \$7,313,256; and the report of the output for the present year shows that up to 1st October it was then in excess of the total output of 1901; and yet one may say that only the edge of the mineral belt is touched up to the present, as it extends the whole length of the Province on the Mainland, and on Vancouver Island, where perhaps some of the richest portions of it are now turning out many, many hundreds of tons daily of high class ore. I cannot attempt to estimate the number of millions of acres of mineral lands yet undeveloped in the Province. There is certainly abundance for explorers for many years to come.

Disparaging remarks are occasionally heard in London about the mines of British Columbia, and I have no doubt that very great and serious mistakes have been made here in connection with the working of some of them, and perhaps still greater mistakes in connection with the manipulation of the finances and in the promotion of the mining companies, probably but a small part of the capital raised having gone into the mines. But this is a condition that exists also in the other great mining districts of the world, and in spite of these mistakes and errors, mining development is steadily increasing in our Province, and as improved methods are invented they will be introduced by the up-to-date companies; in fact, to-day, probably, the British Columbia mines and smelters are in some cases working on as perfect a system as any in the world.

Mr. W. H. Nicholls, President of the Nicholls Chemical Company of New York, who is a great authority in the States on metallurgical matters, and to whose company nearly all the matte produced in British Columbia is consigned, has recently visited the Province, and he says:—

“The trip has proved a perfect revelation. British Columbia is so new that my first big surprise was in regard to the wonderful way in which the very latest mining inventions are being applied to local needs and conditions, and it is remarkable that one should come so far west to see the art of smelting so far advanced. I have examined a good many smelters in the East and West, at various times, but have no hesitation in stating that the plant here is the most modern I ever saw.” Of the mines he says:—
“I traversed a considerable portion of the three miles of underground workings in the mines at Phoenix, and while not unprepared for surprises, the magnitude of the ore bodies far surpassed my expectations; they are the largest ore bodies I ever inspected, and I have had occasion to visit a great many mines, including my own in Mexico.”

Another authority, writing concerning some of the Boundary District mines, says:—
“I visited three of the principal mines. One of these, the Knob Hill and Ironsides, is owned by Canadians; the Snowshoe is owned by a British company; the third, the Mother Lode, is an American undertaking. The Knob Hill is a most remarkable mine. I question if there is anything quite like it in the world, not even the Rio Tinto. Here is a mine that in three years can develop 70,000,000 tons of ore. The ore body is 400 feet wide, and in the three years it has been opened by some 10 miles of underground and surface workings. The Manager showed me where, in one place, they had blocked