

the Fraser River, by some employes of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the fame of the new gold fields soon attracted a host of miners from California. It is estimated that in a few months over 20,000 people arrived at the trading post, which stood upon the present site of the city of Victoria. These were miners bound for the Fraser River gold fields, which at that time were so inaccessible that many perished in trying to reach them. The country was without roads, the Indians were treacherous and the rivers were full of impracticable torrents, so that travelling in those days was no easy matter. Many of the gold seekers returned disappointed, but a sufficient number reached the Fraser cañons and went to work on the bars of that river. The gold found on the lower reaches was what is known as "fine gold," but further up the river it became coarser, and the impression this gave rise to was that still further up the great stream the source of all the gold should be found. To the present day, the same impression prevails—that large deposits of gold will yet be found in the upper country.

So the miners of the early days pushed on with restless activity till the now famous "Cariboo" was reached, and for years the deposits of "placer" gold were worked with remarkable success, considering the small number of men engaged. The output of the Lightning and Williams Creeks was remarkable, and led the miners to adopt more extended operations. It was discovered that, by searching deeper, richer deposits were found. Pumping and other machinery, which necessitated much labor and great expense, was adopted, and old buried channels of streams were brought to light. These were found to run from \$200 to \$1,000 in gold to each running foot in length, and the amounts taken out in some instances were enormous. For instance, in Williams Creek, on the Diller Company's claim, over 200 pounds weight of gold, valued at \$38,400, was raised in one day, and, in 1863, twenty claims were producing from 70 to 400 ounces of gold per diem. The Lightning Creek claims yielded from 300 to 600 ounces of gold per day.

It must be remembered that, at the time in which these great discoveries were made, Cariboo was almost inaccessible, and consequently every article required by a miner was obtained at an excessive cost. But, so long as the gold was found in large quantities, the miners did not grudge the expense. Unfortunately, however, the difficulty in the way of mining with primitive machinery became each day greater, and the amount of gold taken out smaller, until finally the country was practically abandoned. This abandonment, however, was gradual, and the old valleys of the Cariboo yielded, in 1892, over \$200,000.

It is generally admitted by practical men that the indications in the Cariboo point to immense deposits there yet to be discovered. The nuggets found have often been actually mingled with the quartz of the parent vein, and before long these veins will be drawn upon for a second harvest. At the present time, hydraulic works are being carried on extensively where the early miners may be said to have stopped, and the prospects are that a rich return will reward this mode of mining.

The chief difficulty in the Cariboo district is its great distance from the railway, and the consequent lack of proper transportation facilities, but the day is not far distant when this condition of affairs will be remedied, and the fame of the Cariboo will once more spread far and wide. In a little over thirty years, it has produced more than \$50,000,000 in gold, notwithstanding all the difficulties it labored under. What, then, is it likely to produce during the next thirty years under more favorable conditions and with the ground, as a miner puts it, skimmed over.

But now, before proceeding further in tracing the development of the gold fields, we must turn our attention to what, at the present time, is one of the most important industries of the province—coal mining. As far back as 1835, the Hudson's Bay Company discovered outcrops of coal in British Columbia, and made use of it at their posts, but it was not till nearly twenty years afterwards that any attempt was made at mining. The company then brought out some coal

miners from Scotland, and, in 1853, about 2,000 tons were raised at Nanaimo. Subsequently the mines were sold to the Vancouver Coal Company, of London, England, which was subsequently re-organized as the New Vancouver Coal Company, which owns and operates them to-day, under the management of Mr. S. M. Robins.

Hon. Robert Dunsmuir, subsequent to the discoveries at Nanaimo, discovered coal at Wellington, and immediately commenced to develop the mines, which to-day are famous all over the Pacific coast for the excellence of the coal produced. The two principal coal districts of Vancouver Island are those of Comox and Nanaimo, the first being estimated to contain 300,000 square miles, and the latter 200,000; the workable coal in this vast region being computed at 16,000,000 tons to the square mile. Anthracite and bituminous coal are found on Queen Charlotte Islands, but it is not being mined to any extent, and deposits of bituminous coal are also known in the interior of the province. A remarkable undeveloped field of coal lies in the Crow's Nest Pass in the Rocky Mountains, where beds of great thickness and superior quality have been defined. So much for coal. Now let us return to the precious metals.

In 1865, prospectors from the Thompson and Fraser Rivers went into the Great Bend of the Columbia River and eastward across the Shuswap Lake looking for gold. These men were successful for a time, and a considerable amount of money was realized by them, but, when large numbers of miners rushed into the country, the work was overdone and many were disappointed. While this was going on at the Great Bend, miners entered the Southern Kootenay, and the rich placers of that district yielded in a short time over \$10,000,000. These placer operations may be regarded as the beginning of mining development in East and West Kootenay. The way was opened for greater enterprise.

In 1886, prospectors, still in search of placer gold, entered the Kootenay region and camped on Toad Mountain, where one of them stumbled upon an outcrop of ore, of which he took specimens. These were afterwards assayed, and were proved to contain nearly \$300 to the ton of silver. The prospectors staked out the claim, and this was the commencement of the famous "Silver King" mine. The result of this find was a rush of prospectors into the Kootenay region, and claims were staked in every direction. Towns sprang into existence with marvellous rapidity, and the whole district became one of extreme activity. The deposits discovered ranged from \$40 to several hundred dollars to the ton, and the whole region seemed to be full of it.

The building of the Canadian Pacific Railway next gave a fresh impetus to mining, and in the neighbourhood of Illicilliwaet, good prospects were discovered. Many claims were taken up to the north of the track, and much work in prospecting and developing the mines was undertaken. At Revelstoke, a smelter was erected, which, however, owing to faulty construction, has not proved a success. Then came the Kaslo-Slocan discoveries, the deposits being of very high grade ore, and from there prospectors worked their way through the mountains to the head of the Upper Arrow Lake, and thence up Fish Creek. In every direction, success rewarded the efforts of the searchers, and the wonderful richness of the Kootenay region became more evident day by day.

Americans were not slow to recognize the importance of the new country being opened up, and in a short time over \$2,000,000 of American money was invested in the mines. Canada seemed to be asleep to the wealth of minerals she possessed within her borders, while Uncle Sam was quietly appropriating them to himself. Happily the store of riches was too great to be carried away in so short a time, and plenty still remains for the Canadian and English investor. Gold, as well as silver quartz, was discovered, and is still being discovered from day to day, until it seems as if the whole district of West Kootenay is one vast mine of precious metals.

While East Kootenay has not progressed as rapidly as the West, there is no doubt it is equally rich, although the ores found