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### THE MONTH.

"THE most remarkable development the country has seen in any similar space of time," is a phrase that stands in imminent peril of becoming hackneyed when used by the reviewer of British Columbia history, as each year draws to a close and he summarises the events of the preceding twelve months. And, verily, like the stone that once set rolling down hill gathers fresh impetus with every rebound, so is now the progress annually evidenced in the successful opening up of the great natural resources of Western Canada—a possession of which the Empire has ever increasing reason for being eminently proud. What part the discovery of quartz and the subsequent operations of the mines in the Kootenays has played in changing the condition of industrial and financial depression experienced in the Province little more than six years ago, to that of the quite exceptional prosperity and commercial activity of to-day, would be, perhaps, difficult to accurately estimate; but it is nevertheless a noteworthy coincidence, to which the Board of Trade reports testify, that with the beginning of mining in Rossland came the revival and improvement of trade in British Columbia, and since an expansion which, in so short a period, is little less than astonishing. With regard to lode mining, each year since 1892 the output of metals—both precious and base—has been practically doubled, and although all the returns for 1898 have not yet been received, there is ample evidence of a like, if not a still more relatively satisfactory increased production to show for the past twelve months. The most notable events of the year have been, briefly: First, the Klondike boom, which, while it may in certain respects not have exercised an altogether beneficial effect on the Province's mining industry, at least resulted in attracting attention to British Columbia from all parts of the world, and hence stimu-

lated the investment of outside capital in the Kootenay mines. Then, by no means secondary in importance is the building of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway, which, besides opening up the valuable East Kootenay coal fields and reducing thereby the cost of smelting by the cheapening of coke, will also necessarily result in the development of the exceedingly promising but hitherto, in most cases, little prospected districts of East Kootenay. The commencement of actual construction work on the long-promised Columbia & Western Railway from Robson into the Boundary Creek district has given the greatest satisfaction in South Yale, and when probably early next summer the line is completed, it is not too much to expect that some of the mines in this camp will, in a very short space of time, take their place among the largest producers of copper ore on the American continent. But to take the mining divisions of the Province in order, one should perhaps begin with Vancouver Island and the Mainland coast districts first. On the West Coast of Vancouver Island, then, the chief activity has been confined to the old established

district of Alberni, with, we regret to say, not altogether satisfactory results. Alberni has been under several disadvantages this year, and perhaps more "wild-catting" has been done in this district than in any other part of British Columbia. There is also far too little development work carried on in proportion to the area of territory staked out, and one instance could be cited at least of the grossest mismanagement on the part of an English Company professedly operating in this field. The only mine at all entitled to the name—the Alberni Consolidated—has proved of late somewhat disappointing, but many competent to express an opinion hold, nevertheless, that the property is a meritorious one, and under skilful management could be profitably operated. In the Clayoquot and Quatsino districts some very prominent discoveries have been made, and capital, chiefly American, is already being introduced to develop the properties more. The special facilities for cheap ocean carriage of ore and the economic advantages of an abundant local lime, wood and water supply, should, when mining is commenced in earnest in these districts, contribute largely to their rapid development. Near Victoria, at Goldstream, a good deal of quiet work has been done during the year, and on the Phair claim, which has been opened up by a three hundred-foot tunnel, a very fine body of copper ore has been exposed. At Mount Sicker the outlook is most encouraging. A large number of properties are being developed, the Lenora, Copper Canyon group and the Tyhee group being at present actively exploited. On the Mainland coast, at Phillips Arm and Shoal Bay, important developments have taken place during the year, and some very valuable finds have been made. The principal property at present, the Dorothea Morton is now well equipped with a new type of mill, a cyaniding plant and an aerial tramway, and the prospects before this mine and several others