

only waiting for capital and labor to be worked to advantage. Following the mountains north from Wild Horse, a mineral belt extends for a distance of about thirty miles, there are numerous outcrops with good indications, over which locations have been made, among which may be mentioned the Wasa group, where considerable work has been done, proving the existence of a valuable deposit of gold, silver and copper. Returning to Wild Horse and taking a southern course, we are still in the same mineral belt. At intervals of every two or three miles locations have been made, the most important being the Dibble group, situate in a gulch of the Rocky Mountains, about ten miles in an easterly direction from Fort Steele, discovered by James Dibble and a couple of other men in the fall of 1890. The ore is a gray copper, carrying gold and antimonial silver. Numerous assays have been made, showing that the ore which could be shipped averages 300 oz. in silver, \$54.00 in gold, with 12 per cent. copper. A working bond has been taken on this property by some Montana mining men and contracts have been let for the extraction of ore, to be ready for shipment in the spring. The outcrop follows along the face of the mountains on the east side of the valley as far as Elk river, a distance of about forty miles from Fort Steele, crossing Bull river and Sand Creek. At each of these points numerous locations have been made, which have every appearance of turning out well, assays showing that the ore carries copper and gold in considerable quantities.

Returning to Fort Steele and taking a westerly course we strike into the mineral belts of the Purcell range, following up the St. Mary's river, which joins the Kootenay at Fort Steele, we pass through a partially timbered, rolling country, interspersed with open prairie for fifteen miles, before reaching the mountains. Through this section placer mining was carried on to some extent during the old days, but of late years little attention has been paid to it, although it is thought there are spots which would well repay any labor expended on it. During this summer, quartz ledges carrying gold have been discovered crossing the river in various places and have been traced back into the open prairie country. Nothing can as yet be said as to their value, with the exception that there is no doubt that they are well determined ledges, and essays give promising returns in gold. Away up the St. Mary's and its branches, not far from the summit, is a mineral belt which can be traced for thirty miles, carrying copper, silver, gold and lead. About 75 locations have been made in this section, but very little development work has been done in consequence of its inaccessibility at the present time. Trails have been cut in for some distance from both sides of the mountains, leaving a fraction of about twenty miles yet to finish, which it is hoped the Government will carry through next year. On Perry Creek, which joins the St. Mary's about ten miles from Fort Steele, are placer diggings which have been worked for years. A company has control of a good deal of the ground, but a few individual miners still get out quite a little gold every season. From here on across some low mountains to the Moyie river and its branches are several well defined ledges of gold quartz. On the Moyie river itself there is a company engaged, and have been for some years, in hydraulic mining; they meet with fair success and there is no doubt there is other ground which could be worked to advantage. Upon the Moyie and near the source of some of its tributaries, are quartz ledges carrying free gold in paying quantities, it is expected that before long work will be commenced on some of them. Following down the Moyie river we come to lakes of the same name, on the east bank of the lower one is situated what may be considered as about

the most valuable mineral property in the district, distant about thirty miles from Fort Steele, traversed by the old Walla Walla pack trail; it was only discovered in the year 1893. The ledge can be traced from the lake shore to the top of the mountain, a distance of about a mile. The original discovery was made on the precipitous face of a cliff, about 2,500 feet above the surface of the lake, it is at this point where the principal amount of development work has been done, Messrs. Finch and Cronay having about ten men employed getting out ore for shipment. They have at present about 800 tons of ore on the dump, 200 going 58 oz. in silver and 70 per cent lead, 600 going 45 oz. in silver, with same percentage of lead. A tunnel has been run in following the ledge for a distance of 100 feet, showing a width of from 2 to 6½ feet of solid ore and widening out into chambers of even greater width. The ledge has been stripped and can be traced for 800 feet on the surface. They are now running another tunnel and expect, in less than another month, to tap the ore shute at a depth of 120 feet below the present working. There are six claims in this group, all having plenty of ore in sight, and there is no doubt that in a year or two, when the B. C. Southern Railway, which will probably pass right through this property, is completed, this will be a flourishing mining camp.

The formation in which this outcrop occurs is similar to the country rock in the vicinity of the North Star, and it seems highly probable that both groups are situate on the same mineral belt, in fact, allowing for the dip of the veins and contour of the mountains, the formation can be traced right across country from one to the other, therefore there is every reason to suppose that many more discoveries will be made, not only in this section of the country, but all over the district, as there are large and extensive tracts yet remaining to be explored, prospectors having confined themselves principally to those places which were most accessible. But a year or two will make a great change, as everything seems now to indicate that we are on the eve of an era of prosperity in mining matters. Ore producing mines are being worked which will necessitate the building of two or three more steamboats for transshipping the ore. it will also hurry on the construction of the B. C. Southern Railway, which will run through the heart of this section of country, besides opening up those immense coal fields on Elk river, in the Crow's Nest Pass. These coal deposits have been traced for upwards of forty miles through the south-east portion of the district. There are numerous seams overlying each other cropping out along the face of the mountain, between alternate ledges of sandstone, varying from 30 feet to 4 feet in thickness. There are about eleven seams altogether, the lowest known seam being about 1,500 feet above the level of the valley. The coal has been proved to be of first-class quality, and when the property is opened up it will, without doubt, prove to be one of the most valuable coal deposits on the continent.

Therefore, in a few years time, when busy mining camps are established all over the country, and we have railway communication with the outside world, then, with our valuable mineral deposits of gold, silver, copper, etc., our immense coal fields, combined with the large tracts of grazing and farming lands, the boundless supply of timber, the water power attainable from the numerous streams, there is no doubt that this valley will be certainly one of the wealthiest portions not only of British Columbia, but of North America.

The secretary of the Fort Steele Mining Association is prepared to answer all correspondence in regard to the mining interests of the section.