

PREFACE.

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VERY few places have attracted the attention of the world to the same extent as that fraction of the Yukon District of the Dominion of Canada known as Klondike. This interest was aroused within the past few months, and has grown so vastly that scores of thousands are directing their gaze thitherwards, hopeful of fortune and happiness.

That the fullest information be accorded all so inclined, the Hon., The Minister of the Interior, directed that a hand book containing the completest possible information be issued as soon as practicable. Naturally this task fell to myself, as I had been more associated with that region than any other Canadian official. The work was commenced about the middle of December last, a few days after my return thence; and when it is considered that maps had specially to be prepared, photographs selected and put in shape for reproduction, besides much original matter written, and many previous reports by others and myself read, and extracts bearing on that district made, put in order, and connected in an intelligible way with the recent matter, it can be understood why in some respects this book is not as finished as I would like, more especially when we recollect that most of the work fell to myself, as my notes taken in the field as they were, often when my fingers were benumbed with cold and my senses almost paralyzed with long exposure to fierce wintry winds on the bleak mountain tops, were only decipherable by myself, and there was no time to transcribe them into legible hand.

Taken as a whole, I venture to hope the book will fill a great gap, though there may be a few places left unstopped. These, however, can be readily filled by those inclined to think for themselves. The extracts from previous reports have been revised and extended to what was known at time of writing; so, if reference is made to those reports, differences will be found.

The recent part is as full as I thought it necessary to make it.