

seasons, long before the word Klondyke became a familiar sound, and the only difference this year will be that their prospecting will be further afield. Moreover, where capital is there labour will follow. As to the Kootenay miners themselves, if gold is to be won in Yukon they will win it. There is no more sturdy race of men in the world and Kootenay owes much to their pluck and energy.

THE COAL INDUSTRY OF VANCOUVER ISLAND.

THE coal city of Nanaimo has long been known as the "Newcastle of the Pacific Coast," and it now aspires to be another Liverpool. Here coal is king. As an industrial, commercial and distributing centre Nanaimo yields to none, and the smelters, manufacturing and works projected will doubtless sustain the ambitious claim. Aided by a short connecting line of rail to Gabriola (southeast end) the distance from the terminals of the Canadian Pacific Railway, can be abridged to almost an hour's passage by ferry. The cars that have been hauled for three thousand miles may thus be shunted to the merchant's door. Nanaimo, of course, claims a share of Klondyke trade—the coal steamers must have, and why not stores. This port is the final calling place in the province, on the northern voyage, and the first touched on the return. The advantages are obvious.

While the chief market for the famous Vancouver Island coal is in San Francisco and southern ports of California, the gradually enlarging provincial trade is a most important factor in the success of the industry. The prospects of a greatly increased local demand are the result of mining enterprises in this Island and province, and the outlook for securing the Klondyke trade.

THE FORMATION.

The avenue to the wealth of our coal beds was opened by the mighty uplifting force of the mountain upheavals, whereby large areas of the coal-bearing strata were raised from the "vast deep" and tilted up, at various angles, so that after the glacial erosion, the rocky escarpments were left in view with seams of coal exposed, and these when discovered were mined **from the daylight, down, until Dame Nature's obstacles cut off pursuit.** And thereby hangs a tale, for just as in human life the good is mixed with ill, so the first beneficent rising of the giant mountain being all good, his after shaking and lateral push were evil of the direst kind, and many a "fault," "synclinal" and "anti-clinal" crush, with "troughs" and "pockets" large and small, and total "wants," and troubles innumerable, are the coal operator's opprobria and inheritance, and the Island coal seams have their full share of these incommoding and expensive ills. Our coal barons deserve, at least, the meed of commendation, for their undaunted courage, perseverance and plucky determination, in combatting with the many difficult troubles and discouraging circumstances which they have shown in carrying on the industry underground in the face of reckless foreign competition, congested markets and tariff handicaps.

The explorations so far made on Vancouver Island have determined the existence of certain well-defined areas of the sandstone and conglomerate strata that indicate the existence of productive coal measures—proved in some instances by the exposure of upper seams of coal, good enough, which though too thin for

mining use, are favourable indications that workable coal beds will be reached at lower depths.

COAL AREAS.

The most valuable of these coal areas stretch along the eastern coast and at the northern end trend round to Quatsino on the west. Coal was first discovered on Beaver Harbour in the north in 1835, leading, in course of time, to the establishment by the Hudson's Bay Company of a coal mine at Fort Rupert. This field extends from Fort Rupert to Port McNeil, some fifteen miles to the south, and is known as the Suquash coal measure and Malcolm Island has the same measures there. From the Suquash there is a valley that reaches Quatsino Sound, a very spacious inlet from the Pacific, branching into harbours and arms, leading to all points of the compass, and nearly severing the Island by Rupert Arm. On almost all these shores the cretaceous coal-bearing rocks are in view, mainly on Winter Harbour, (Forward Inlet, where good coal has been proved, of an extensive area) and again at Koprino Harbour. That the true measures are on Quatsino Sound, and at Suquash, the prospecting by boring and other research has shown. Not long ago the Fort McNeil Coal Mining Company proved the existence of a seam of coal, of fair thickness, in their bore-hole, and the surface indications there, as on the Sound, augur well for a northern field of bituminous coal of great extent and value.

Continuing southerly the east coast is barren, so far as coal is concerned, until after passing through Seymour Narrows, the coal measures recur near Campbell River, whence they run down the coast, embracing Denman and Hornby Islands—the Comox area—in which are the celebrated Union mines of the Union Colliery Company. Thence south through Qualicum, Englishman River, Nanoose, Wellington, Nanaimo, Gabriola, Cedar and Oyster Districts—with Wellington mine extension south of Mount Benson. In these localities there are fields of bituminous coal of large area and productiveness. At Chemainus is a break until Macpherson's, where there is a promising area that will repay investigation.

The chain of islands running from Gabriola to Saturna and Tumbo are coal-bearing with indefinite continuations beneath the Straits.

On the large Island of Salt Spring the coal measures appear, and there as well as in East Saanich and on adjoining isles coal will yet be found of good commercial value.

From Quatsino Sound, southwards, on the west coast, the characteristics which denote the presence of coal-bearing strata appear occasionally along the shore. Very good prospects are said to exist at Hesquiot Harbour, until the cretaceous rocks are overlapped by the tertiary on the coast of Fuca Straits. Otherwise, in many places, the rocks are highly mineralized, the metamorphic rocks are seen, and for long stretches there are only gneissose rocks, crystalline limestones and porphyry. These realms will well repay the adventure of the prospector. Of the *terra incognita* inland of Vancouver Island it may be predicted that some of the many valleys between the mountains will, in due time, prove to be coal-bearing of the same cretaceous horizon. A draw back to exploration for minerals of any kind, is the mass of vegetation growing everywhere round the lakes and on the river banks, preventing thorough search and concealing all but exposed sections.