

**SILVER.** When the Cariboo excitement had waned considerably, and the more profitable diggings had all been worked, some adventurous spirits pushed their way eastward to the wild region in the neighborhood of the Bend of the Columbia, meeting with considerable success, but with more importance attached to ultimate results than to their actual profits. From this district another band, prospecting to the southward, in 1893 accidentally stumbled across an output of ore, which proved to be rich in silver, associated with copper. From this discovery dates the opening of the Kootenay district and the development of silver mining therein.

For a time satisfactory progress was retarded by the exaggerated values placed on claims by their discoverers, themselves without means of opening them up, and by the difficulty in local transport of large quantities of ore. The first obstacle has removed itself naturally, the second is being overcome in the construction of trails and short lines of railroad connecting the natural water ways. As late as 1892-3 discoveries of silver ore, phenomenally rich, were made in what is known as the Slokan group of mines, a trustworthy assay of seventeen specimens from which giving a silver average of 178 oz. per ton, and a lead average of 61%. From September 13th, 1891, to March 16th, 1895, 4,641 tons of ore, valued at \$178,000, were shipped from this district alone; while for 1891 the entire value of silver ore shipped from the province was \$793,460, against a yield of silver for the years 1889 and 1890 of an estimated value of \$17,873 and \$73,981, respectively. Hitherto there has been no adequate and permanent means of treating ores in the province, all having to be sent to smelters at Omaha or Tacoma; but a smelter on Kootenay Lake commenced operations so lately as the 14th of March, 1895. British Columbia's first export of base bullion ever made was from this smelter on the 17th day of the same month.

It is a very significant fact that these important developments in silver mining have taken place at a time when silver has commanded an abnormally low market price, and when the industry elsewhere has been exceptionally depressed. It is also remarkable that the majority of the mines are worked by American capitalists and miners with experience brought from the silver mining States, and that the entire products pass directly over the boundary line. Physical features and railroad connections favor this last result.

**COAL.**—Preceding the discovery of gold was the recognition of the existence of coal on Vancouver Island in the year 1835, from which date small quantities were used for smithy and other purposes by the Hudson's Bay Company's agents. In 1850 well defined and extensive deposits were discovered at Nanaimo, and in 1852 actual work began. Further discoveries have since been made, and the coal measures on Vancouver Island alone are estimated as covering 500 square miles. The industry has made steady advances to the present time, the last few years alone showing fluctuations. From 1852 to 1859 25,400 tons were shipped from Nanaimo, comparative production since being as follows:

| Year.      | Tons.     |
|------------|-----------|
| 1860 ..... | 14,250    |
| 1870 ..... | 29,850    |
| 1880 ..... | 268,000   |
| 1890 ..... | 678,140   |
| 1891 ..... | 1,029,097 |

The output for 1891 has not since been equalled, the nearest approach to it being that of 1894, 1,012,958 tons. In quality the Nanaimo coal is superior to any worked on or near the Pacific coast, and even with price heightened by duty, commands a better market in San Francisco than any duty-free competitor. Diminution in production

is not regarded as permanent, being due to trade depression; and the industry has for many years been a staple one, having long been established on a most satisfactory financial basis.

Coal occurs in many districts throughout the province, ranging in character from anthracites to lignites, but, as far as interior beds are concerned, the difficulty and expense of shipment are so great that little has yet been done toward development. Just beyond the eastern boundary, and on the main line of the Canadian Pacific railroad, is a valuable anthracite mine in active operation. The survey for the alternative railway line through the Crow's Nest Pass proved the existence there of beds phenomenal in thickness, while other deposits are elsewhere recognized in proximity to indications of iron.

**OTHER MINERALS.**—Gold, silver and coal, though ever likely to remain the chief factors of mineral wealth to the province, do not by any means constitute all. Large deposits of iron—already worked to some extent—copper, mercury, iron pyrites, plumbago, mica, and asbestos are known to exist. Platinum has lately been produced in more considerable quantities than in any other part of North America, and as the province becomes more thoroughly explored, "it seems probable," says Dr. Dawson, "that few minerals or ores of value will be found to be altogether wanting."

**LUMBER.**—Some idea of the value of the lumber resources of British Columbia may be gathered from the inferences drawn by Mr. George Johnson, statistician to the department of agriculture, in the recently published report on the forest wealth of Canada. One of these is to the effect that, with the exception of spruce as to wood, and British Columbia as to provinces, Canada is within measurable distance of the time when it shall cease to be a wood exporting country. This at once places a high value upon the existing growth of timber in the province, and implies a resource when similar ones in other parts of the Dominion shall have failed. Prevailing climatic conditions have fringed the bays and inlets of the coast with timber, of exceptional size and density of growth; the mountain slopes of the interior are all wooded, and in no portion of the province is the supply of timber insufficient for local demands. The lumber trade, however, has not of recent years shown great vitality, a consequence of depression in foreign markets and speculative shipments. Values of exports have fluctuated very much, as appears from the following figures:

| Year.      | Value of Exports |
|------------|------------------|
| 1884 ..... | \$158,565        |
| 1886 ..... | 194,448          |
| 1888 ..... | 441,765          |
| 1891 ..... | 391,996          |
| 1892 ..... | 425,278          |
| 1893 ..... | 454,851          |

Exports for 1891 were of greater value than has been the case in succeeding years. In 1894, 67,500,000 feet of timber were cut, and 65,000,000 feet in the preceding year. The revenue derived from that source by the Government was \$59,500. The chief seat of the industry always has been, and always is likely to be, in the coast and island districts—in which are situated the majority of the saw-mills—both on account of the growth of timber and the facilities for collecting logs and making shipments.

The chief trees are conifers, besides oaks, maples, poplars and alders. About 85 per cent. of the lumber is obtained from the Douglas fir, which makes excellent building material. Its density of growth is remarkable. The best specimens of the tree average 160 feet clear to the first limb, and from five to six feet in diameter at the butt. Exceeding this in size and girth is the cedar, which is in much request for fine dressed

woodwork, doors, frames, sashes, etc. The manufacture of shingles from this tree is probably the industry connected with lumbering which has developed most of recent years.

**FISH.**—While it was as a gold-yielding country that British Columbia first attained prominence, it is to a large extent to its fisheries that it owes world-wide advertisement, since the products of its waters, whether tinned, dried or frozen, have found their way into all quarters of the globe. Probably its fisheries are the richest in the world, and the peculiarly sheltered nature of its coast must be recognized as serving to greatly minimize the danger of a usually precarious calling. The fish caught include salmon, halibut, cod, herring, cocolachans (peculiar to the northern coast), and others.

Salmon canning as an industry has assumed extensive proportions, and rests on a secure and profitable basis. Each year, with unflinching regularity, shoals of the fish visit the inlets and rivers of the coast in such numbers that, by those unacquainted with facts statements on the subject are often received with incredulity. In the case of the Fraser river an abnormally large "run" takes place every fourth year. It is on this river that the majority of the canneries are situated and on it that operations were commenced in 1876, when two canneries "put up" a pack of 9,817 cases. Next year the number of canneries had doubled, and the pack increased to 67,887 cases. For the fifteen years ending with 1890 the total pack was 2,572,000 cases. Since the figures have been:

| Year.      | No of Cases. |
|------------|--------------|
| 1891 ..... | 315,177      |
| 1892 ..... | 228,470      |
| 1893 ..... | 590,229      |
| 1894 ..... | 491,369      |

One of the phenomenal runs took place in 1893, and the pack for that year is the largest on record, being valued at \$3,150,609, the average value for the ten previous years being \$1,578,417. In 1894, 51 canneries were in operation, of which 30 were on the Fraser, while four more are in course of construction for the season of 1895. As the trade is almost entirely an export one, the profit of the industry to the province is apparent.

With the exception of halibut no fish has yet been caught for other than the home market. During the winter of 1894-5, however, several companies were incorporated with the object of supplying the eastern markets with this fish, at a time when it could not be obtained on the Atlantic coast, and the very success attending such enterprise has proved likely to defeat itself. Halibut were caught in such abundance that the supply exceeded the demand, and one company, at least, closed the season in financial difficulties. On one trip a vessel obtained 120,000 lbs., and in six trips 520,000 lbs.—evidences of the richness of the fisheries. Increasing attention has been paid of late to facilities for freezing, drying and canning different varieties of fish, and it is not improbable that in the near future still more attention will be given to the development of this valuable resource.

**SEALING.**—Partly to be classified with fisheries and partly with the fur trade is the sealing industry—one of considerable importance to the province. Begun in 1878, it has made gradual but steady progress since that date, although, with the low price of skins at present ruling, it is not likely to be capable of much greater extension. According to the latest obtainable figures—for 1893—the number of vessels engaged was 55, and the value of the catch was \$874,812, an increase of \$241,723 over that of 1892.

**FURS.**—The fur trade of the province has now been entirely dwarfed by younger rivals, and has ceased to command attention from