

but it is in point of richness that the great majority excel. It is entirely agreed among all the mining men and experts who have visited this country, (and they have been many) that mines of such richness do not exist anywhere, and probably never did exist anywhere, as the American continent. There is only one mine in the Slooan which does not run over one hundred ounces of silver to the ton, and several run steadily over two hundred, and even three hundred ounces. A few shipments have yielded returns immensely higher than any of these figures, but they were probably not fairly representative of their mines.

The opening up of this remarkable district has been very rapid. Although it was only discovered in 1891, it is already tapped by the Nakusp & Slooan Railway, and but for the Slooan, the Nelson & Port Sheppard Railway would not yet have been built. Charters have been obtained for two other railways right into the heart of the Slooan district.

Already three towns have sprung up in the district. The Slooan is divided into two mining camps, almost equal in importance, the Silverton camp, and the Carpenter Creek camp. The former is, and must always be, supplied from the town of Silverton, but it is questionable whether the chief supply point for Carpenter Creek will be New Denver or Three Forks. The latter has the advantage of closeness to the mines, and the general opinion is that it will be the "hurray-town," the place where "the boys" will go to have a good time, and where there will be most cash in circulation. But New Denver has the advantage of a magnificent site on Slooan Lake, and is by far the most desirable place for residence. All the mine-owners who have wives and families will live there and have their offices there, and nearly all the women and children of the district will be resident at New Denver. Moreover, New Denver is situated about half-way between the two mining camps and will, therefore, be the center for Government business, professional men, schools, and probably banks. The Government buildings of the district are already there, and very fine buildings they are. New Denver will, therefore, be the seat of population and of what in a mining camp would pass for respectability, but Silverton and Three Forks will be the places to make money and do the business of the mines.

To an Eastern Canadian it is an interesting experience to come out to a mining camp. Canada is known throughout the world as the Mecca of the respectable and the pious. Not so, West Kootenay. A man coming from Ontario or Nova Scotia would think twice before saying, "This is my own, my native land!" "Holy Willie" could not have kept soul and body together in West Kootenay. Neither is there much seal for prohibition in this district. There is something in the climate that makes a man very "drowsy" at times. Yet drunkenness in its worst forms is very rare. At the last celebration of the anniversary of Burns' birthday in New Denver sixteen men drank eighteen quarts of Scotch whisky, yet not one of them had the least difficulty in walking home. But in the more important Christian virtues these men of the West can give a good many pointers to the men of the East. No man will ever starve out here while his neighbors have anything left to share with him. Many a saloonkeeper in the Slooan has supported troops of men during the long winters, when work was scarce and prospecting impossible. On the whole, I prefer the publicans at the Slooan to the Pharisees of a good many other places.

### Silverton.

Whether it be war or peace, Silverton is all right. While the silverites in many of the mining sections are resting on their arms, the Silvertonians are keeping up the even tenor of

business and piling up what the Rothschilds are trying to knock down. I never was so surprised as when the other day from the deck of the William Hunter I gazed for the first time upon this unique little metropolis. Surely Silverton was well named. As the boat gracefully skimmed up to the wharf I divided my attention between the radiant faces of the passengers and a great, long, but compactly built, wooden shed open in front and facing the landing. Approaching, it became evident that the entire building was filled with mail sacks. "No, it is not possible," mused the tenderfoot half aloud, and then a Silvertonian came to the rescue by remarking, "No, stranger, those are not mail bags; they are full of high-grade silver ore, and there are seven hundred and fifty tons all ready for shipment here now, and there are ten tons coming in every day. I could scarcely believe my eyes, but the surprise once over I summed up the situation and ground out an aphorism something like this: 'The town that makes the biggest splash once has the smallest pile of ore on the wharf.'"

But there is another and very sufficient reason why Silvertonians may be pardoned for giving their idol a name so euphonious that a tongue-tied child may lip it.

Silverton is situated on a silvery lake. A poet once applied this title to a lake some-



A CHERUB OF THE SELKIRKS.

where in New York State, but we will excuse him, as it is a matter of history that he never even gazed upon Slooan's amber waters or ruffled her bosom with his paddle. Slooan Lake is about twenty-eight miles in length and from one to one and a half wide, and the prettiest and most charming piece of water in all British Columbia. From the watershed which forms a circle around it, at an average distance of ten or twelve miles, turbulent streams dash down to meet their placid mother, whose clear depths are the home of innumerable speckled trout and a joy to navigators as well as the lover of the reel and rod.

It is on the east shore of this charming lake, about four miles from New Denver, that Silverton has her home.

The growth of Miss Silverton has been quite remarkable when it is considered she only dates her birth back to a June day in 1893. Now she boasts of two large well equipped hotels, another nearly completed, a large store completely stocked with general merchandise and miners' outfits, a post office and a large number of cow dwelling houses. The town site is a model one, fronting as it does on the lake and sloping gracefully back

to the foothills. In all it contains nearly three hundred acres, not a rod of which is broken, save through the heart of the town site, where Four Mile creek meanders down to join the lake.

Perhaps one of the strangest facts to the Winstepor or Torontonian in relation to this appropriately named mining village and lake port is, that up to within four weeks ago everything in the way of supplies was very expensive, the freight from Nakusp on the Upper Arrow lake alone being from two and a half to five cents a pound.

Everything was brought by pack train in those days as far as the head of Slooan lake, a distance of twenty miles, and from there by boat. But now, with the advent of the Nakusp and Slooan railway, the freight drawbacks have been much facilitated, the railway now bringing Silverton's freight to and receiving her ore at Wilson Creek, eight miles distant by water. Over this route plies regularly the steamer W. Hunter, named after one of her owners, who is also an active member of the trading firm of Hunter & McKinnon, proprietors of the Silverton store as well as a large and well established business at New Denver. This boat was built two years ago by the Slooan Trading and Navigation Co., and was the first to ply on this lake. She is sixty feet in length with a twelve foot beam, registers thirty tons and comfortably accommodates from thirty to fifty people.

But a few minutes more with the silver question and I will leave you to judge for yourself of the prospects in store for Silverton. Nearly all the great silver mines of the rich Slooan country are tributary to and in close proximity to Silverton. There is enough of the metal in sight within a radius of ten miles to build up a Leadville once the mines are all being worked. From the Alpha, two and a quarter miles up Four Mile Creek from Silverton's wharf, one four-horse team draws daily eleven tons of ore, which assays sixty per cent. lead and nearly two hundred ounces of silver to the ton. It has been estimated that the Alpha mine can deposit this ore at the wharf for less than three dollars per ton. The owners of the Alpha have an almost inexhaustible supply of ore to draw from, and it would seem that they must find it profitable in the future now that the railway so much facilitates transportation. Five miles up Four Mile Creek are located Lead and Hobinson's claims.

On the same side, up on the Carpenter creek divide, the Canadian group and the Ivanhoe are located, and only nine miles away the Fildar Maiden still holds the greater portion of her treasures. On the south side of the creek, five miles nearer Silverton, is the Vancouver group, and on the same side are all new locations. Silver Mountain, near Silverton, on its different sides has the best silver mines in the country. Another fact worth noting is that fifteen new claims, several of them known to be very rich, have been prospected within a few miles of Silverton, and up at the head of Four Mile Creek gold quartz is now being brought out in considerable quantities. The rapid development of mining in the Slooan country can best be judged when one stops to consider that it will only be three years next October since Eli Carpenter and John Seatin first discovered the white metal—the Noble Five group on Carpenter Creek—and turned the eyes of the world toward Slooan.

Silverton is reached from Canadian points through Hazelton, B. C., on the main line of the C. P. R., and from American points through Nelson, B. C., via Spokane or Bonanza Ferry. If the prophecies of mining experts and business men of impartial judgment become realizations, Silverton will be long outstrip all competitors and proudly take her place where she belongs—at the head of the procession in West Kootenay.

Communication between Silverton and New Denver is conducted by means of a telephone