

The Commercial in British Columbia

Our Representative Visits Rossland and Trail

Rossland is one of the largest and most important mining camps in Canada. Its site is not all that could be desired, as it is a level, unexciting and at a high elevation, but the spot was selected on account of its being so close to the great mine from which Rossland derives its support. It has a population of about 5,500 and is a modern city in almost every respect, care being about the only modern convenience not at hand. There is a good water system, as well as electric light and telephone, and railway connection is furnished by the C. P. R. and a branch of the G. N. R. Known as the Columbia and Red Mountain railway, five chartered banks are represented and there are two large breweries, a cigar factory, three sawmills and a large number of retail stores.

Last year saw great increase to the number of buildings. A solid brick block was erected for the first time, a bankers and public library, a court house was built by the provincial government at a cost of \$40,000, and a very great amount of money was spent in the erection of dwelling houses. While some valuable hand-mining was done, the greater number were of a rather cheap class, in fact one of the notable features of the year was the number of small buildings erected by the miners, to year since the boom having been succeeded in this respect. Everything looked as if the camp was getting on to a permanent basis, as if the men working in the mines felt they were here to stay, and many who had up till then rented houses, or were boarding, purchased lots and built their own homes. A large sum of money was also expended on improvements at the mines and the erection of a number of large additional buildings. At the Le Roi there was spent about \$250,000 in surface improvements consisting of new shaft house, sampling works, tramway, air compressors, hoists, etc. Thus the Le Roi is now equipped with much the largest hoist in Canada.

Rossland depended entirely upon the mining operations carried on in the vicinity for its support. The main claim in the Trail Creek division, of which Rossland is the principal camp, was taken in 1883, and in the following year some of the most important mines were staked, namely, the Le Roi, the War Eagle, Idaho and Virginia, but it was some years after this before any regular shipments were made. The first wagon road was built between Rossland and Trail and the Le Roi commenced at once to make regular shipments. In 1893 this wagon road was followed by a narrow gauge railway connecting these two points, both of which have since been acquired by the C. P. R.

The cost of mining here is much greater than in some other parts of the province as the rock is very hard and the ore cost more to smelt than the Boundary Creek ores, as they do not contain as much fluxing materials. It is estimated that it costs from \$50,000 to \$150,000 to bring a mine to the stage when shipping can be started profitably. This accounts in a large measure for the difficulties which had to be contended with in the early history of the camp and which took years to overcome. Then too the smelting charges have been very high in the past, so that only the richest ores could be shipped at a profit, but the charges for transportation and smelting have been gradually reduced to such an extent that the lower grade ores can now be profitably shipped. The average rate of ore sent is placed at \$15 a ton so that with good management at the mines there is no reason to be had that the cost of the ore shipments for the year 1900 amounted to 217,438 tons of an aggregate value of \$2,261,570, which is about 150,000 tons, of a gross value of \$1,400,000, was contributed by the Le Roi. The next largest was the War Eagle, which produced 40,000 tons, while the War Eagle came somewhat under \$10,000,000 in figures. The amount taken from the report of the minister of mines, show an apparent value for the Le Roi ore of less than \$10 a ton and for the whole camp of very little over \$10 a ton. This is not

the exact value, however, as the reports are based upon the smelter returns, which deduct 5 per cent from the gold values, 5 per cent from the silver and all of the copper up to 13-10 per cent. To cover the loss by smelting. During the month of March, 1901, the shipments were at the rate of 450,000 tons a year, and in both April and May they were increased so that there seemed to be every assurance that the total shipments for this year would exceed half a million tons, but some trouble has arisen between the miners and mine owners and it is hard to say to what extent it may lead. Mining operations have been on a very satisfactory basis for some time but hopes are entertained that matters will be adjusted in the near future.

Trail is situated on the Columbia river and Trail Creek, eight miles from Rossland. It is one of the oldest towns in this part of British Columbia and

men working around this smelter totals to about \$30,000.

It is beautifully situated on the west shore of Kootenay lake and is one of the most desirable residential cities of British Columbia in a west main respects. The fishing and hunting is very good, the scenery is pretty, there is excellent boating and many other attractions which draw a large number of tourists to this spot each year.

It is well supplied with steamship and railway transportation facilities, which enable us to keep in close touch with a large district. The Kaslo & Slocan Railway runs to Sandon, the C. P. R. Co. has a steamer running daily to and from Nelson, the International Navigation and Trading Company have steamers running to Nelson and Kuskanook, connecting with the G. N. R., while a host of these steamship lines make regular trips to Lardo at the head of Kootenay lake. Kaslo has electric light, water and telephone systems, good stores, newspaper, bank, etc.

There are a considerable number of ranches around this district, where vegetables and fruits are successfully grown. Strawberries mature particu-

larly well and apples, pears and cherries do a very well.

There are now two years' run of ore in sight in the workings and have 1,000 tons of ore stacked at Whitewater station ready for shipment. This is a high grade silver-lead ore.

There are some gold properties around here, which are beginning to attract attention. The Fleischer group is the best known of these. Nothing but surface work has been done as yet and the showings so far are very rich and it is expected that considerable work will be done this year.

On the South Fork of Kaslo creek is the Bismarck. This is a silver-lead carbonate of 100 ounces silver, with 14 per cent lead, while the clean run averages 280 ounces silver and 72 per cent lead. This property has one of the richest ore chutes in the country and has paid its present owners a handsome profit for all work done.

The Clark, B. N. A. and H. O. R. on this creek, are also being worked by small gangs of men.

At the head of the South Fork is Camp Mansfield, which is a free-milling gold country. Large quantities of machinery are on the way from London for the Joker claim and they



Court House, Rossland, B. C.

was an important business place in its early days, as nearly all the business of the district was handled here. This, however, was cut off by the construction of railways, and other sources of revenue which were expected did not materialize, so that it received a considerable set-back still there are a number of merchants here who continue to do a good business, as the C. P. R. smelter gives employment to between 400 and 500 men, all of whom live at Trail. On Lookout Mountain there are a number of claims on which development work is being done, which also brings some business to this place. These have given some good surface showings, but there has not been sufficient work done yet to prove their value. Trail was incorporated as a city on the 29th of June, with a population of about 1,200.

The chief interest here is centered in the smelter, which is the largest in Canada. It was erected in the early part of 1886 by the British Columbia Smelting and Refining Company, but was passed into the hands of the C. P. R. Company, which has enlarged it from 350 tons daily capacity to its present capacity of 1,000 tons. Last year three new furnaces were added, giving now four copper and two lead

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As a business point Kaslo has good prospects, as it has tributary to it several excellent mining districts, which have hardly got beyond the first stages of development yet. In the Lardo district the C. P. R. is undertaking a run away from Lardo on Kootenay lake to Trout lake, a distance of about 44 miles, which if it is exposed, will have completed this fall. This runs through a district which is well mineralized and takes some of the richest gold and silver mines in this country. It is said that the surface showings of ore district the C. P. R. has been doing in British Columbia, and although it has been a very expensive undertaking to develop, it is expected that owing to the cost of transportation, still there are a lot of mines which will bring a lot of business to Kaslo. Several of the mines around Sandon and Whitewater ship ore by way of Kaslo and of course this creates a certain amount of business here and there are also several camps along Kootenay lake which draw supplies from here.

One of the best known mines in this locality is the Whitewater, near Whitewater station on the K. S. R. This property has been a steady ship-

ment.

The True Blue, near Kaslo, is a high grade gold and copper composition, owned by the Canadian Gold Fields Syndicate. They are now making surface workings of all workings, and when these are completed a large force of men will be placed at work. Some shipments have been made with good results, but no ore has been sent out under the present management.

The Globe Mining Co., which has recently been re-organized on an assessment basis, owns the Leviathan group. There is every reason to believe that these claims will soon be among the largest shippers in British Columbia. They have a ledge 100 feet wide which runs right through the 11 claims constituting this group.

The King Solomon Mines, Limited, own about 35 claims at the mouth of Woodberry creek. A large amount of development work has been done and a concentrator erected.

About \$50,000 has been expended in development work on the Sunset, No. 6, and Mayflower claims, owned by the Woodberry Mines, Limited, and some ore has been shipped.

Some work has been done and the Pontiac and Tecumseh claims and the