

A prospectors' outfit usually consists of a prospectors' pick and a small axe, a pair of blankets, a tent, a frying pan and kettle, and provisions in a condensed form, such as bacon and beans, flour, molasses, tea, and canned goods, etc. Conditions of time, distance, character of country, accessibility of supplies and so on determine the size of the outfit. A prospector usually "packs" from 50 to 75 pounds on his back. Such a life does not prevent any royal road to riches, but like many other arduous callings when once entered upon is hard to relinquish and an old prospector looks to a couple of months in the mountains each year, in the same way as an actor does to an annual touring. It has its fascinations, and every man, no matter what his experience has been or discouragements, expects to "strike it rich" some day.

Few men in a mining district but has a claim to which he fondly looks to make a fortune for him as soon as a railway comes in, or something else happens which is sure to come about. Every man Jack of him will tell you he has the best claim in the district. Some figuratively speaking sit down by it and wait for a capitalist to come along and pay him his price. He will stay there until he gets it, which is usually a long time, very often never. Others either barter them away at a nominal price for present necessities and go on searching or let them drop as a plaything which has served its term of pleasurable prospects. A few comparatively speaking do the sensible thing and develop their claims as far as their means will permit and then selling or giving an interest to some person with means enough to prove the value and permanency of the lead. A rich "strike" is the discovery of a vein or deposit of rich surface showing, which usually finds a ready bonder if not a purchaser.

Essentially the business is a lottery—one full of anticipations and big chances, intermingled with numerous disappointments. To go into it to succeed a man requires shrewdness, nerve, good judgment and some capital. Experience is a great factor. While as a class the American mining fraternity is characterized by a commendable *morale*, there are many who are thoroughly unscrupulous and conscienceless. No other calling has been productive of more trickery. It is against that class of men that investors must be on their guard, because the pursuit is one above all others wherein appearances may be deceiving. Such men, like the professional horsetrader, may be in other respects quite honorable but will deliberately let you in on a mining deal. It is like an instinct.

Prospecting for places is determined by "colors of gold" obtained in a prospecting pan. Vein matter is indicated by the character of "float," or surface rock, different minerals being variously determined in this way. A prospector, though he may be in no sense a mineralogist or metallurgist becomes very expert and for practical purposes may often be relied upon to a greater extent than the scientific expert, though of course the man with the scientific acquirements added to local experience is by far the better off.

Some curious finds, other than minerals, are often made by prospectors. Some strange relics of man found where human beings were never supposed to have been. A peculiar find was made on the summit of the Slocan mountains this summer, being a handsomely bound copy of the Bible, with the words "presented by G. W. Rasure, cowboy evangelist," no other name appeared. It had lain under the snow all winter and had evidently been lost by one of the early discoverers last fall.

THE SLOCAN COUNTRY.

Finds which created great excitement and a mining boom.

Prior to September of last year the existence of minerals in the Slocan district was merely a conjecture. It is said now that this, that and the other one knew of the galena ledges which have excited so much attention, but there is no written record of any such knowledge. Gold commissioner Fitz-Stubbs says in his report that the existence of minerals in this region had been known for years. The mines, he says, appears to be in the limestone belt which Dr. Dawson noticed as running south-easterly from about the foot of Upper Arrow Lake. However, that may be, Dr. Dawson in none of his reports makes any mention of minerals in the vicinity of Slocan Lake, or even hints at any knowledge of such, although as the map attached to his report of 1899 shows, the general character of the district was not unknown to him. And it was not until J. L. Seaton and Eli Carpenter made the discovery in September last that any attention was directed to it, although the country all up and down the lakes and the Lardeau north of it had been prospected for years.

They located a claim near Carpenter Creek and came out to get supplies and assistance. It was understood that these discoverers had agreed to share equally in all finds, but this was disclaimed by Eli Carpenter, who was the pioneer of the district and a guide. It

was ascertained, so it was said, that he had shaken his partner and was working with other parties. At all events there was a misunderstanding between the two, and Seaton organized a party known as the "Noble Five," consisting of J. L. Seaton, W. F. Hennessy, J. G. McGingian, F. W. Flint and J. J. Hennessy, who started in and made the discovery of the Noble Five group on the summit of the divide between Kootenay Lake and Slocan Lake, which are named as follows: Maude E, World's Fair, Bonanza King, Knoxville and Noble Five.

These veins are very rich and if surface indications are any criterion of the wealth of the ledges as they go down it undoubtedly is one of the richest lead and silver camps on the continent. Twenty assays made ran all the way from 20 to 2,000 ounces per ton in silver, the average being \$175. The width of the ledge is from 6 to 8 feet. A mineralized ledge has been uncovered varying from 12 to 25 feet in width. Of course this must not be mistaken for solid ore, which would be phenomenal, but measuring between the walls of the ledge, and in which, in what is known as ledge matter, are one or more rich veins of solid galena.

The argentiferous galena is of three kinds—coarse cube, steel and wavy galena. Coarse cube is the predominating ore in these finds and a peculiarity of the mineral belt to which these claims belong is that while in the Cour d'Alene and other mining districts south of the line coarse cube galena is invariably low grade, immediately north of the line in the Kootenay Lake district it almost is invariably a high grade ore.

THE EFFECT OF THE SLOCAN DISCOVERY.

The news of these finds spread like wild fire and soon prospectors came pouring in, though late in the season, and the result was an excitement which had not been equalled in British Columbia since the early mining days. Not only that, but the discoveries led to most important results both as to government and to railway policy and brought to the notice of the outside world the resources of the Kootenay country in a more emphatic manner than anything that had as yet occurred.

Slocan has been the prevailing talk ever since among mining men: Prospectors went in and remained all winter and a number of what is called snow claims were recorded, that is, the stakes were put into the snow on "spec" to hold until spring opened. The attention of storekeepers, packers, steamboat and railway men and speculators, as well as miners and prospec-