

the public knows or can know is that last year a nasty accident occurred in the shape of a slide which somewhat postponed their harvest, and that year after year they take in the same gang of men and offer no shares for sale.

They left again for their mine on May 22nd, and those who wish Cassiar well, will wish them good luck. They are at any rate fortunate in retaining the services of Mr. Alexander Hamfield, a practical mine manager whose reports are not the only "admirable" things about him in his business.

The earliest days of Cassiar are, of course, connected with the operations of the H. B. Co., when in 1834 that company tried to make use of the Stickine as a road to the Cassiar fur district.

As usual it was fur seekers first and then the gold seekers, just as it was in Siberia and indeed in South Africa, except that in Africa the pioneers were hunters and wing seekers rather than fur trappers.

But in 1861 a man named Choquette came wandering through the country with pick and pan and found gold upon the river bars. This brought the first small rush of miners to the country. I believe that some of Choquette's sons are to-day mining in the Klondyke.

In 1873 a little Frenchman named Tribert and McCullough found gold upon the streams which run into Dease Lake, having wandered thither from Red River by way of the Liard, trusting for food principally to the fish in the lakes *en route*.

In two years nearly four thousand miners had joined Thibert and McCullough and in all, I believe, that some four and a half million dollars in gold dust has been sent down from Cassiar, but McCullough died of cold and hunger on "the Desert" at the mouth of the Stickine River, almost in sight of Wrangel, and the last time I saw Thibert he was making dog collars for a living. I believe that the hardy old man is still alive and taking his share in the prospecting of the Klondyke.

To my mind, the Cassiar country is again upon the eve of a fresh attempt at development. The movement may not come this year, but a successful season on Thibert Creek would go far towards causing an excitement the year following.

If it is possible to teach people anything in this world, the people who would be benefited by the creation of a great mining industry in Cassiar, I mean those of the Coast cities who deal in supplies, must have learned that up North, although we have a treasure chest, it costs much to open it, and that those who, like Mann & Mackenzie, are ready to risk the opening must be tempted to do so by terms more generous than those offered to men embarking upon a business certainty. Therefore, perhaps the next people, whoever they may be, who want to gamble upon a railway in the North, will get a shade better offer than their predecessors, and in order to tempt them to try I would call attention in closing this article to the following facts:

Contending with very great obstacles and hampered by the lack of all facilities for transportation, the men of the pick and pan took out four and a half million of coarse gold from the creeks of a small portion of

Cassiar in the seventies, and any man with eyes in his head can see that the country to-day is littered with quartz float and seamed with great veins of quartz. True, few of these quartz reefs have so far been found rich in gold, but few have been prospected. A sample here and there has been chipped off for assaying by the passing prospector, but I believe that it is unusual for a quartz ledge to carry gold through its entire length.

But on the other hand, if we turn to the miner's guide and friend, Dr. G. M. Dawson, in his "Mineral Wealth of British Columbia," pp. 137 R., we will find that "heavy gold and pellets of silver" were found on the Tahltan; that Dease Creek in 1873 "yielded from \$8 to \$50 a day to the hand in coarse gold; Thibert Creek yielded coarse gold; Defoe Creek yielded "gold coarse, rough and often full of quartz, large nuggets including one of fourteen ounces," and the Doctor assumes that this gold is "evidently derived from massive deposits of quartz, which occur at the head of the creek." MacDane Creek in 1874 yielded from \$6 to \$100 a day of "coarse gold worth \$17.75 to \$18.00 an ounce. The high and varying value of her gold is characteristic of Cassiar, the highest in value, I think, being worth \$18.25 an ounce. On Snow Creek "the richest single claim in Cassiar—paid for a week 300 ounces for six or eight men. Seventy-two ounces were washed from one pan of dirt in 1876 and "decomposed rusty quartz containing gold" was found on this creek.

Now turn to the same author pp. 50 R. of the same book and you will read:—

"Save in a few exceptional cases the occurrence of coarse gold in the old channels may safely be accepted as proving that the original source of the gold is not far off. The distance to which coarse gold travels is, as a rule, very inconsiderable, even in the beds of rapid streams. Additional evidence to the same effect is generally offered by the varying assay value of the gold found on different creeks, or even on different parts of the same creek, and this is often emphasized by the rough uneven character of the gold and the circumstance that it not infrequently still holds imbedded fragments of quartz."

The gold in the different creeks in Cassiar runs in assay values from \$15.50 on Dease to \$18.25 on Rosella. We have, then, every indication not only that our creeks and their old channels would pay the hydraulic miner as handsomely in proportion as they paid the "cream skimmers" of 1872, but that the gold in our gravels is a proof that the quartz from which it came is not far off, and I am convinced, though my conviction as a mere amateur is worth noting unless my reasoning is sound, that when Cassiar has had its fair share of prospecting by men who are experts at the business and when facilities of transportation have made it worth a man's while to find anything but pure gold, a quartz mining industry will spring up in that country which will do something to compensate the business men of our Coast cities for the wealth they sent to Seattle when Mann & Mackenzie lost their charter.