

The British Columbia Mining Critic.

"I am Nothing, if Not Critical."—Shakespeare.

The British Columbia Mining Critic.

ISSUED WEEKLY.

Devoted to the interests of Mining and the Protection of Investors.

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Letters from practical men on topics connected with mining, mining machinery, mining laws, and matters relating to the mineralogical development of Canada, are always welcome.

Manufacturers and Dealers in appliances used in and about mines are invited to send illustrations and descriptions of new articles.

Views and descriptions of mines and mining locations solicited.

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THE YUKON DISTRICT.

Marvelous tales of gold discoveries in the remote Yukon country have found their way into the bounds of civilization. Deposits of a richness scarcely surpassed by the most extravagant dreams of the prospector are said to have been brought to light there. When the stories were first brought hither, they looked too much like the produce of a riotous imagination. Adventurers returned to the United States with pans running from \$150 to \$338, and of nuggets worth being picked up in the loose gravel. Juneau correspondents of United States newspapers drew pictures of the prospect so dazzling as to cast California's golden age into the shade. These accounts have been verified almost in detail by sober official reports.

First, there was Inspector Constantine's report upon the work of the mounted police detachment at Fort Cudahy. This is now followed by Mr. William Ogilvie's report on the Yukon district. The first of these stated that new gold-bearing creeks were being discovered every day both on the east and the west side of the Yukon, the great river which gives its name to the district. It took note of the stampede to the new diggings on Bonanza creek. But when we turn to Mr. Ogilvie's report of surveys in the Yukon district, we are made to feel that the half has not been told in previous accounts. His advices are dated at Fort Cudahy, and cover a period extending from the latter part of 1895 up to the 23rd of January. Writing in November, he says that every report coming in from Bonanza creek is more encouraging than the last; that the claims prospected on there show from \$1 to \$12 to the pan of dirt, and that this means from \$1,000 to \$12,000 per day per man sluicing. In this latest letter he refers to the Eldorado creek, from which he says that three pans or different claims were taken, yielding respectively \$201, \$212

there are many running from \$10 to \$50. When it is remembered that dirt which averages 10c. a pan is considered rich, a measure will be afforded of the phenomenal wealth of the Eldorado and Bonanza creek strikes. Eldorado creek is a tributary of Bonanza creek, Bonanza is a tributary of the Klondyke or Klondak river, and the Klondyke is one of the eastern tributaries of the Yukon. All these names—Yukon, Klondyke, Bonanza, Eldorado—have stamped themselves in letters of gold upon the imagination of probably millions of people. At the mention of them, visions of fine gold in heaps start up, and carry the fancy away to the region, otherwise far from enchanting, where the claims are being staked out with such feverish haste. The fame of the country has attracted the attention of a group of British capitalists, the Duke of Teek among the number, who desire to form a Yukon Chartered company, to take over the whole district for administration and exploitation. But the development of the prodigious resources of that vast country is no undertaking to be given over to any corporation with governing powers. The aid of a monopoly will not be needed to overspread the Yukon with settlers and the works of civilization. There is evidently the wealth there. Enterprise will attend to the rest, if the government does its duty. The miners want a route opened up from the south, in order that this part of Canada may be entered by Canadian territory with supplies for the camps. The large railway policy to which the British Columbia government has just committed itself—especially the plan for the Cassiar, or northern section of the province—will extend the lines of communication much closer to Klondyke, and will make it easier to connect that outpost with the trade of the country. But there must be some kind of road, with stations on it for shelter, for traffic in and out from the south. Last summer a drove of cattle was driven in from the coast to Pelly by trail. For 150 miles of the journey the cattle were maintained by bunch-grass, which grew plentifully along the route.

The Klondyke and its tributaries are not the only rich branches of the Yukon in Canada. There are two other eastern affluents farther up its course—Indian creek and Stewart river. Many of its western tributaries have also been proved to be rich in gold. As to Stewart river, it is believed to be one of the richest of the Yukon streams. Some time ago the minister of the interior called for tenders for the lease of the exclusive right to dredge for gold along 100 miles of the bed of that stream. The quiet brief advertisement of this concession excited the suspicions of the people of British Columbia, who mistrusted that the government had its company selected before its call for tenders was issued. In reply to an inquiry made in the house by Co. Prior, Mr. Sifton gave a rather unsatisfactory answer, stating that the government had not concluded whether to accept any of the tenders or not. The transaction which was evidently contemplated is one that the government would prefer to put through as slyly as possible. Developments in regard to Stewart river should be carefully watched. A deal of such vast magnitude should be thoroughly ventilated before it is completed. Twenty-five cents an ounce, the royalty, which it is rumored the govern-