

We would again call attention to the opening which we believe exists in the Cariboo country, for a company with a large capital to undertake the supplying of water for hydraulic purposes, to the various mines in that district. It is worthy the consideration of capitalists and, if it is practicable, as we think it is, it would be one of the best paying investments in this country. Millions were made out of it in California. Why not here where the show of gold is even better?

Mr. Clemes, the English mining expert, has left on his return to the old country, and the best thing he said, while here, was that he would likely be back in British Columbia next spring. He would not be coming back here if he had not seen something to bring him.

Speaking again of trade with our mining districts, we see no reason why Canadian, and especially British Columbian, wholesalers should allow it to flow into the United States, as it has been doing largely in the past. The country may be new, and the dealers comparatively unknown in some instances. But the trade is there to be done, and during the coming season the quantity of goods that will be required to supply the demand is likely to be very great. Whoever secures the trade of our mining districts now, is likely to retain it for some time to come. Let British Columbia look out for her home trade.

West Kootenay Reminiscences.

BY G. O. BUCHANAN.

I made my first visit to Kootenay Lake in May, 1888. Mr. R. G. Lemon built a scow of twenty tons capacity at Revelstoke, this he loaded with merchandise and with the help of half a dozen men, navigated it to Sproat's Landing, now Robson. I went along as a passenger. Mr. Sproat was on the ground and had a town staked off, and was cutting a trail toward Toad Mountain. Several American outfits were camped on the bank of the Columbia. Mr. Lemon pitched a big tent and opened out his stock and continued to do business there for a year or more.

Jas. McDonald, the furniture man, Jack Egan, and myself walked into John Wards' tent-hotel, the principal feature of what is now the town of Nelson. The trail was cut about eight miles. Beyond that we walked on windfalls, and tore our way through thickets of willows and rose bushes. We ran down the Slocan River on a raft of our own construction, and crossed the Kootenay narrowly escaping the descent of the rapids below the junction. We reached Kootenay Lake in two days. The next day, May 23rd, we went to the Hall mine. A snow storm was raging and the Halls were in their cabin. I think that they would have sold the mine for \$100,000 but we had not that amount with us. I staked a timber claim on Toad Mountain, and one on the outlet sixteen miles up and returned to Revelstoke. I came down the next spring bringing my family. I brought in sawmill machinery from the Northern Pacific Railway, built a mill on the outlet, and sawed the first board on the 12th of July, 1889.

John Ward's town had in the mean time been plotted and named Nelson. During this year some hotels and other buildings were erected. The renovated steamer Galina appeared in Kootenay Lake, and made bi-weekly

trips to Bonner's Ferry. The Idaho, Surprise, and Midge, small steam launches, were also running. Mr. R. D. Atkins became interested in the Hall mines, and the chain of events began which led to the formation of the present Hall Mining Company. Mr. Davenport built the crusher upon the Eagle Creek gold mining property, and Messrs. Stanley and Davys put one upon the Gold Hill prospects. Steam power was put in at the Blue Bell mine by Dr. Hendry. The pack trail from Sproat's Landing to Nelson, was finished, and the people of Kootenay Lake, who have since so frequently been heard from, clamored for a wagon road over the same route.

In 1890 the Columbia and Kootenay Railway was commenced; the Davies, Sayward, and Nelson sawmills were built; active development began upon the Hall mine, and a considerable amount of ore was shipped, but proceedings were checked by the death of Mr. Atkins. A good deal of work was also done at Ainsworth during this year.

In 1891 the C. P. R. was finished, but loud complaints were evoked by the refusal of a charter to the Nelson and Fort Sheppard Railway. The steamer Nelson was launched; the Kootenay Lake telephone wire was strung from Nelson to Ainsworth and to Toad Mountain. The site of the smelter at Pilot Bay was chosen and work upon it begun. The townsite of Kaslo was plotted, and put upon the market by Geo. T. Kane. In the fall of this year the country was electrified by the news of vast discoveries of mineral in the Slocan.

Eighteen hundred and ninety-two was mostly a Slocan year. Hundreds of claims were staked in the new camp. By monumental energy roads were forced in from Nakusp and from Kaslo. The latter town grew rapidly. Mr. E. E. Coy took out to Tacoma, ten tons of ore from the Dardenelles mine and brought back \$5,000 in gold coin. The big boulder containing one hundred tons of galena, worth several thousand dollars, was found.

The Great Northern Railway, after protracted hesitation, chose a northern route, and built along the bank of the Kootenay River to a point of connection with boats from Kootenay Lake. The steamers Ainsworth and Spokane were put in commission.

In 1893 the rosy hopes of the pioneers were dashed by the collapse of silver values. Silver had been sick for some years, but just when Kootenay was ready to produce it, the artificial stimulants, by means of which a fictitious and precarious vitality had been kept up, were suddenly withdrawn.

The temporary outcome was depression and suffering in Kootenay, as everywhere.

The work of development, however, did not cease. The Nelson and Fort Sheppard Railway was built and the Nakusp and Slocan begun, and some thousands of tons of Kootenay ore were profitably marketed at prices which dropped during the year from 85 cents to 57 cents.

Eighteen hundred and ninety-four had signs of returning prosperity, but again the stars in their courses fought against us. One-third of the City of Kaslo (incorporated in September, '93) was destroyed in February by a midnight conflagration of suspicious origin. In May Kootenay Lake rose to the unprecedented height of fourteen feet above ordinary high water. The low lands were flooded, the rivers engorged—land-slides and washouts could be seen everywhere.

Cyclonic outburst of wind followed, accompanied with fresh deluges of water where there was already too much—nature redressing the lost balance of atmospheric gravity by summary methods. The early removal of snow also prepared the surface for the spread of forest