

tion to take this step, which the increasing demands upon the bank make most desirable.

The Bank has now almost 100 branches (a number having been opened during 1910) not only in every province of Canada, but also in the United States, Jamaica and Cuba. Mr. W. P. Hunt continues as the manager of the important St. James' Street, Montreal, branch.

MINING IN THE PORTLAND CANAL DISTRICT.

The most authoritative data yet available with regard to the much-discussed Portland Canal mining district now appears in a report by Mr. William Fleet Robertson, the Provincial Mineralogist of British Columbia. Mr. Robertson describes a visit of inspection which he paid to the district in October, and since at that time many of the claims at higher altitudes were covered with snow, while on others work had been temporarily abandoned for the winter, but comparatively few of the claims recorded and partially developed could be inspected; consequently, this preliminary report must be taken not as a complete view of the camp, but as an impression gained from a short visit and the inspection of a few claims. Moreover, while the history of mining in the district only began this fall, prospecting has been going on steadily and quietly for ten or twelve years, and the district has been twice visited by the Provincial Assayer, so that Mr. Robertson confined his attention to seeing what had been done on the more developed claims and on those which report credited with more nearly approaching the production stage.

The Portland Canal Camp cannot, as yet, writes Mr. Robertson, be taken as proven, for, although some prospecting has been going on for years, the great majority of the claims have been staked within the past couple of years, and consequently have not and could not have had sufficient development done on them to prove their value. Only two or three of the older claims have done serious development, and of these, at least one property has shown by such that ore is present in quantity and quality sufficient to justify its being called a mine, and to guarantee extraction from present development for at least two years. On other properties where the actual development is slight, the work done by Nature has exposed such an amount of mineral as to give considerable hope for future development. The camp contains a large number of properties from the prospect workings of which exceptionally high assays have been obtained, giving rise to unwarranted hopes and statements which cannot be borne out on a strict examination. The camp justifies reasonable expectations, for the development done, without exaggeration by well-intending though injudicious friends whose wild statements nearly "killed with kindness" the best endeavours of legitimate workers. The reports circulated in the newspapers of a "mountain of gold" were, of course, unjustified and did the whole camp much harm, but apparently did not originate with the prospectors. There was, however, some small foundation for the reports; a very large ledge of quartz had been located, containing small gold values—the ledge is large and the values obtained justify further prospecting—that is all that is claimed for it by the locators.

Mr. Robertson describes interestingly the development which has taken place in the district as a result of the "rush." Seldom in British Columbia, he writes, has the truth been so clearly demonstrated as at Stewart, that the value of an ore-body is dependent upon the facility of getting its contents to market, and still more seldom have the facilities been so quickly obtained. Portland canal affords a land-locked waterway by which any vessel may approach the town of Stewart, where the tidal mud-flats offer proper holding-ground for pile wharves; this has been taken advantage of, and a pile wharf, with a pile approach from the shore, a mile long, is now nearing completion; while a local railway company has built a splendid railway dock and approach, over a mile long, and has equipped it with standard-gauge tracks. The same company has about completed a railway grade up the valley of Bear river to the mouth of American creek—a distance of approximately fifteen miles—and could, should it desire to push matters, easily have the rails laid over this length before snow falls. A locomotive and a number of cars are now on the ground ready for use, and rails have been laid from the landing as far as the railway-station. The valley of Bear river on the flat will average about half a mile wide, being rather more than this near its mouth; its course is nearly straight, and it rises at an almost uniform grade—about 500 feet in fifteen miles. The valley bottom is gravel, permitting of cheap railway construction, while the first nine miles of the railway-grade contains one tangent of four and a half miles in length and many shorter ones. The hills rise abruptly from the valley, affording the best of opportunities for aerial tramways, with ample room on the flat for requisite mill-sites. The tributary streams are all too steep to admit of railway construction up them; an exception to this rule is, however, presented in Bitter creek, up which a railway might easily be built for a distance of from six to seven miles, or possibly to the foot of the glacier, with aerial tributaries from the side creeks. Bitter creek valley is really a branch extension of the river valley, and is similarly filled with detritus from the glacier. The Provincial Government has built a waggon-road, with necessary bridges, from Stewart up the river valley, as far as and across Bitter creek, over which two stages travel daily each way. A further extension of this road as far up as American creek, including a bridge across Bear river, was under construction this autumn and promised to be completed before snow falls.

The townsite of Stewart occupies the middle portion of the gravel flat at the head of the canal, and is platted to cover a considerable portion of the tidal flats which it is thought might eventually be filled in. The town contains three good hotels—much better than one would expect to find in so new a town—and innumerable boarding-houses; there are several exceedingly well-equipped and stocked stores supplying all the necessities and many of the luxuries of life and requisites for mining or prospecting. There are a number of office buildings occupied by brokers, real-estate agents, etc. The town has its own newspaper, two competent assayers, two doctors, and a well-equipped hospital. There are several good private houses and many temporary structures; but the