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The Kootenay Country.

A gentleman named Mr. Hammond, writing about the Kootenay district, British Columbia, says: The actual settlers in this district, not counting the prospectors who are continually wandering through the mountains looking for "Bonanzas" are very few and very scattered, and a correct estimate of their number is consequently hard to obtain. Their employment is principally ranching and mining, the latter of which has the greatest share of attention owing to the facilities the district offers for such industry.

The principal mines are those of Wild Horse Creek, Findlay Creek, Perry Creek, Palmer's Bar, Moigea River, Bull River, Weaver Creek, Illecillewact, and Kicking Horse, and the Kootenay Lakes, the latter of which are the latest and give promise of proving by far the richest.

The Kootenay Lake mines have some of the largest deposits of galena and grey copper in the district. At the mouth of the Kootenay River a mine has recently been discovered consisting of grey copper, which brings from £100 to £180 to the ton. At the big bend there are alluvial or placer diggings, and upon French Creek, Forty-Nine Creek and along the Columbia there have been several bars found that pay pretty well.

The timber of this district consists principally of pine, both white and yellow, cedar, fir, and tamarac, and spruce, which for mountain timber is very good. The grass is principally "bunch," and the soil sandy and sandy loam. Such vegetables as have been tried by the settlers have turned out a very fair success, and I have no doubt that with proper irrigation, crops could be grown with a fair result in almost any part of the district.

The Indians here are divided into five bands, each having its own chief. Four of the bands belong to the Kootenay tribe and one to the Shuswap. The Upper Kootenay Indians are mostly canoe Indians; the Lower are horse Indians.

It is the custom of these people to hold a great meeting once a year, when all the delinquents of the past twelve months receive punishment for misdemeanors, by being stripped, tied

to a post and flogged. As many as three hundred lashes have been known to have been given by a long strip of "Schaganappio" or hide.

The greater portion of their time is spent in hunting and fishing, the mountains and rivers affording an inexhaustible source of fish, flesh and fowl.

The principal fur giving animals are the grizzly, brown and black bear, beaver, martin, fisher, lynx, otter, wolverine, fox, mink and muskrat. These furs the Indians dress by a process peculiar to themselves, and then trade them to the whites for such supplies as they may require, viz, ammunition, traps, knives, etc.

The skins of the Rocky Mountain sheep and goats, the black and the white tailed deer, are also, when dressed, a source of income to them, as it is from these, especially the deer skins, that the buckskin shirts and pants are made that are invariably used before the progress of civilization brings in the use of civilized garments. The squaws of the tribe are very handy at beading these shirts, moccasins, legging, etc., and turn out some very pretty handwork, although their style of beading does not come to that of either the Cree or Sioux Indians of the Northwest Territories.

Fish are very plentiful in nearly all the rivers and lakes of the district especially salmon and trout, but many other varieties are to be found there also, giving great sport to all disciples of Isaac Walton.

The Indians have a mode of spearing fish by going out in a canoe at night. They pick upon a very dark night so that the canoe is invisible to the fish below, then on reaching a place where the water is shallow, wave a lighted torch over the water, when all sorts and conditions of fish are seen flashing in the clear water beneath, and every dive of the spear, which is shaped like Neptune's trident, brings up one or more upon its prongs.

The two modes of travelling here are either on horseback by the mountain park trails or by the rivers. It is hard to say which is preferable, for in the former it is necessary to mount rocky and precipitous places where it is hard for a horse to get a foot-hold, and in the latter the rapids on some of the rivers tend to break the monotony of quietly paddling up or down.

The scenery, either by pack trail or river is undoubtedly grand, the commanding look of the mountains which rise range behind range, first the Rockies, then the Selkirks, and further on the Gold Range with the rugged wooded country, and the winding rivers and placid lakes, all tend to lend a charm to the true lover of nature.

—Kamloops Sentinel,

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