



A General View of Nelson, B.C.—from the other side of the Kootenay River.

# THE CAPITAL OF THE KOOTENAYS



Mr. F. A. Starkey,

Now serving as President of the Board of Trade for the third time. An Englishman by birth, he has lived fifteen years in Manitoba and ten in Nelson.

ocean of mountains, the chief valleys being filled with bodies of water which are called lakes—Upper Columbia and Windermere Lakes in East Kootenay; Kootenay, Slocan, Upper Arrow and Lower Arrow in West Kootenay. But every intelligent reader should look up this district on the map.

In this wonderful, three-valleyed district there are many towns, though none of them are large. The towns are Revelstoke, Nelson, Kaslo, Rossland, Trail, New Denver, Sandon, Slocan City, Fort Steele, Fernie and others more or less promising. Of these, Nelson claims to be the chief, and its supremacy is at present beyond question.

Nelson lies on the side of a broad hill on the south side of the west arm of Kootenay Lake. A few miles west is Robson and a few more miles south, Trail and Rossland. A short trip in the steamer which leaves Nelson harbour daily or oftener takes you to Kootenay Landing or, if you so desire, to Kaslo. These steamer trips are important, since Nelson cannot be approached from every direction by rail.

The town of Nelson, with its six or seven thousand inhabitants, is the product of the mining boom which struck Southern British Columbia in the middle nineties. Someone discovered the Silver King mine and Nelson resulted. When the Hall smelter was built and the C.P.R. plunged across the hills from the foot of Arrow Lake, its future was assured. When Mr. J. J. Hill connected it with the State of Washington by the Kaslo & Slocan Railway, its success was certain. Thirteen years ago a mining camp, eleven years ago celebrating its incorporation, to-day a city with paved streets cut through the rocks and up the hill-side, with a sewage system and waterworks, with gas, electricity and electric street-cars! Eleven years incorporated and much larger and more prosperous than towns in Ontario and elsewhere incorporated four and five times as long. Ambition, energy, enthusiasm, determination, daring—and Nelson became the capital of the Kootenays.

The gorgeous branches of the Bank of Montreal and Bank of Commerce indicate that Nelson's financial transactions are important. The Silver King mine petered out temporarily but the Hall smelter got trade elsewhere, for there are many mines in

the district. The lumber companies, the railway shops, the ship-yard for the fleet of boats on Kootenay Lake, the iron works, the engineering works, and various other industries added to the activity. Then followed the wholesale trade. The larger firms in Winnipeg and Victoria established branches in Nelson from which to distribute goods to the small dealers and the mining camps. There are two electric light companies—the civic plant, which is situated nine miles up Cottonwood Creek, and the plant of a private company at Bonnington Falls. The latter concern transmits power to several towns. Its capacity is 16,000 horse-power, with arrangement being made for another 16,000.

Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, president of the C.P.R., was both shrewd and thoughtful when he donated a cup to be competed for annually at the Nelson Exhibition. First he chose to encourage vegetable and fruit growing—and in this sea of mountains they are proud of these products. In the second place, he had the cup made of silver mined, smelted and refined in Canada. The combination is a most happy one, and Sir Thomas is highly respected throughout that district.

A quotation from the Nelson "News" will give a home opinion of the fruit-growing industry:

"To commercial and manufacturing industries the town of Nelson is not limited alone. In its immediate vicinity fruit-growing is already making great progress and promises to afford the means of support for a very considerable population. The shores of the West Arm of Kootenay Lake for several miles to the west and about twenty miles to the east of the city are now dotted with the homes of prosperous fruit-growers. Strawberries are unexcelled and have a standard market value of their own in the towns of the prairie provinces. Raspberries, cherries and all other small fruits yield an excellent and abundant crop while the "red apple of the Kootenays" has become notorious, and it and all varieties of apples, pears, plums, peaches, yield remarkably good crops. Not only in the immediate neighbourhood of Nelson are these orchards and fruit ranches to be found. Along the Slocan Lake and River, at various points on Kootenay Lake and on the shores of the Columbia River and Arrow Lakes, the influx of settlers is already establishing itself and the trade from these newcomers will more or less naturally centre in Nelson."

No one ever visits Nelson but desires to go back. Its salubrious climate, its brilliant sunshine and its wonderful scenery make it a delightful place for a vacation. The lake, which is really but a broadening out of the Kootenay River before it takes its final plunge to join with the Columbia River some twenty miles south-west, affords a twenty-mile stretch of navigable water suitable for small boats as well as large. The mountains shut out the winds, and the surface of the water is never dangerously ruffled. Motor-boating is becoming a most popular and extensive sport. Then there is fishing, mountain-climbing and plenty of amusement for the botanist and geologist.

What Nelson is, British Columbia is. There is perhaps no town in that largest of Canadian provinces which is so typical. Strawberries, river-steamers, saddle-horses, smelters and mountains! That sums up British Columbia, though the strawberries do not go so very far north. Vancouver and Victoria are not typical—nor on the other hand are Laggan and Field. The smooth, eastern look

of the two larger cities speaks more of an agricultural country and an older civilisation. Laggan and Field lack the smoke of the smelter and exist purely for the tourist. Nelson epitomises the characteristics of the province. It is not eastern, nor yet western; it is just British Columbian.

## The Bounty on Lead

NELSON has one great desire at the moment—a continuation of the lead bounties. A petition has been prepared and sent forward to the Dominion Government. It sets forth the reasons as follows:

1. That said lead bounty has by insuring a stable minimum price, been most effective and beneficial to the lead mining industry, with it to the smelting and lead manufacturing industries, and, consequently, to the general commerce of the Dominion.

2. That such results have been produced by a relatively small expenditure, as was anticipated and as was represented when the original request for consideration was made to the Government. Out of \$2,500,000 originally voted to be expended in the period of bounty terminating 30th June next, but \$616,976.02 have been expended up to 1st December, 1907.

3. That, on account of the high tariff on lead ore and its products, still imposed by the United States Government (which it was anticipated might be reduced ere this); of the recent imposition by said Government of a prohibitory duty on our zinc ores, a product of our lead bearing veins, thus depriving us of a source of revenue, and of the fact that the lead consuming capacity of Canada has not increased proportionately to our output, since the inception of the bounty, we shall at the expiration of said bounty period, be still unable to rely on a stable minimum price for our lead, sufficient to justify its production in the form of ore, and the large expenditures on exploration and development work necessary to maintain our mines and with them the entire lead industry of Canada.

4. That, without such a stable minimum price we cannot produce our ores, during periods of low prices in the world's markets, which govern the market of Canada, and with such intermittent production the inducement to expend the necessary large sums in exploration and development will cease to exist, consequently the present ore reserves in our mines will be exhausted and with them the lead mining industry.

5. That, with the United States tariff and the consuming capacity of Canada as at present, the necessary stable minimum price can only be assured by a continuance of the present bounty or by extraordinary increase in the existing Canadian tariff on lead and its products.

The undersigned therefore respectfully request that the Lead Bounty Act be extended for a further period of five years with an expenditure not to exceed \$500,000.00 in any one year.

One part of Canada wants lead bounties, another steel bounties, another ship-building bounties and so on. The Government at Ottawa must have considerable trouble to even classify the various "wants." Southern British Columbia is a district which should be encouraged if any should be. It has not had too easy a road to travel and its problems are not any too easy of solution.