

VANCOUVER AND THE CLONDYKE

The B.C. correspondent of the London, (Eng.), Mining Journal comments as follows on this topic in the latest issue to hand of the oldest of all mining newspapers:

Very few other than officers and men of the Mounted police, whose services are likely to be sorely needed to keep order this winter among a population of desperate, because cold and hungry miners, are now leaving British Columbia for the Clondyke gold fields. All sensible men here recognize that it is necessary for the prospector to wait till spring, unless he wishes to take his life in his hand and risk it quite unnecessarily. Hence, acting upon advice to this effect, many would-be gold-seekers in the Yukon, making thither via British Columbia, are wintering in Vancouver, Victoria and New Westminster. The warning attitude of the Mining Journal's editorial policy in regard to the Clondyke gold excitement is here commended by such old northern placer miners of solid judgment as happen to be aware of the advice given your readers, whilst the pretensions to knowledge of the Yukon asserted by some directors of hastily organized Yukon syndicates formed lately in London, are here regarded with derision.

"There are men thus posing, whose only knowledge of mining in Western Canada rests on the basis of a hasty visit to West Kootenay, made either in the course of a sporting or political tour, plus a few days stay and occasional conversation with mining men at the comfortable Hotel Vancouver. The want of knowledge of far northern circumstance displayed by certain attempting company promoters would also be ludicrous were it not lamentable by reason of the possibility of its duping the British investor. Thus one promoter had an idea of sending cycles and candles to the Yukon, and utilising for transport the services of Ramsgate fishing smacks, utterly incapable of safely "rounding the Horn," to say nothing of the perils of the rough northern navigation of the Behring Sea. Would-be British investors in Yukon companies will do well to remember that many—probably most—of the telegrams sent to England, via Victoria, Seattle and New York, exaggerate greatly the gold as yet got and brought out, this being often done deliberately to promote travel and outfit trade.

"The "Western American" news correspondent is a born "boomer," and seldom fails to use any opportunity afforded him when he thinks it can be made to enhance the temporary profits of the people of his town. There is absolutely no trustworthy evidence yet available to show that the Yukon's gold output of the season 1896-7 exceeds some \$5,000,000 at the highest estimate, whilst in all probability it will be found con-

siderably less than this total, which, divided amongst those engaged, means no more than fair wages for those engaged in the case of most, and moderate fortunes for a very small minority, though now that the "boom" is on, many are selling their claims to syndicates, and syndicate promoters, for "fancy prices" many times in excess of their real intrinsic values. "Old timers" here declare and point to statistics in proof, that the Clondyke is no richer than were the Cariboo placers of old, and these after all only brought wealth to a few, and never sustained a population of more than 20,000, or thereabouts, whilst there were no hugely capitalised companies needing excessive profits, in order to make the most moderate success. And the rich Cariboo placers yielded in all during 20 years or so not more than some \$60,000,000. Yet the Clondyke companies of New York alone now ask for \$100,000,000 of capital. The Mining Journal cannot, in your correspondent's opinion, strike too loud a note of warning as to the premature enthusiasm for the Clondyke, as famine and exposure will long before the spring cause bitter lament for many lost Clondykers. Already the Yukon death roll—little noted by cable correspondents—is very large, typhoid fever, lung troubles, exhaustion, and drowning accidents having in a few weeks claimed victims, many and sturdy amongst the Clondyke argonauts, many hundreds of whom are now camping out in the cold, under such conditions of self-neglect and exposure as are sure to prove fatal to a large percentage unless they speedily return to winter quarters in some town centre of civilized comfort. The best news concerning the Clondyke—towards which, notwithstanding all possible warnings, there will be a big rush in and after the spring season of next year—is the intention of the C. P. R. to inaugurate, in connection with its trans-continental and trans-oceanic services, a special steamship and railroad route to the Yukon gold fields, starting from Vancouver. A well-appointed coasting steamer will in the spring carry passengers north, and at Glenora, on the Stikkeen River, disembark them on a line of light railroad to be built between Glenora and Teslin lake. From Teslin lake and along the Yukon to a point near the gold fields another C. P. R. steamer will carry the passengers in safety and fairly comfortably. There will be little difficulty for the company in providing the steamship services, and the 100 mile connecting railroad is said to present no very special engineering difficulties. Already the surveys are being commenced, and, doubtless, if the line be not all constructed by the spring the company will then have part of the work accomplished, and by some other fairly efficient temporarily substituted means of travel provide for the transport of passengers over the short interval between Glenora and Teslin lake. The proposed

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" 10.03 "	Bear Lake	" 1.48 "
" 10.18 "	McGuigan	" 1.34 "
" 10.28 "	Junction	" 1.12 "
Ar 10.50	" "	Lv 1.00 "

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R. W. BRYAN,
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