

MINING TIT-BITS

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IN THE MINING DISTRICTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The mineral region of British Columbia is a part of that great mineral belt which extends from the international boundary line northward over twelve hundred miles to the rich Yukon Valley in Canada and Alaska—probably extending still northward to the shores of the Arctic Ocean. Gold, silver, copper, lead, cinnabar, platinum, coal, and iron have already been found in vast quantities, and there are indications of other precious metals in large bodies. The entire Province seems underlaid with minerals, and no man can say what the discoveries of the near future may be.

The total mineral production of British Columbia to January, 1898, had been over \$110,000,000. The total product of the lode mining in 1891 was \$29,607, while in 1897 it was about eight million dollars. This is now constantly increasing, while the product of placer mines is rapidly increasing also as a result of the opening of the Atlin and other great placer-fields in the northern part of the Province. Of the lode mines, those of the Slokan and Kootenay districts are by far the most extensive and best developed.

Access to these fields from Canadian territory is either over the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway to Revelstoke, thence over the branch lines of railway and by steamer, or over the Crow's Nest Pass Division of the same line, via Lethbridge or Calgary. To the tourist and sportsman, as well as to the miner and the business man, this trip offers attractions not excelled on the American continent. The scenery is grand beyond description, game abounds in the mountains, and in the waters are trout and grayling of the gamiest kind. The great Columbia River, rising in a series of lakes, flows steadily in a northwest direction and is first crossed by the Canadian Pacific at Donald. This northwest course is continued for probably two hundred miles, when it suddenly swings round the northern end of the Selkirk Mountains, sharply to the south, and continues this general course for several hundred miles to and beyond the boundary line. In its southern course it is again crossed by the Canadian Pacific at Revelstoke. The territory inclosed north of the C. P. R. is known as the Great Bend country, and is destined to become a great mining section, hydraulic mining, as well as quartz mines, being already in successful operation.

Next, to the southward, come the Lardeau and Trout Lake countries, both rich in minerals, and only waiting for transportation facilities to become large producers of silver, lead, gold and copper. These facilities are to be afforded during the coming season, as both the C. P. R. and the Great Northern are surveying lines and preparing to build. South of this lies the great Slokan country, with its silver-lead mines; and to the eastward of it is the Ainsworth and Fort Steele country, bounded on the east by the Upper

Kootenay River, and on the west by Kootenay Lake. Then, still to the south, comes the world-famed Kootenay country, divided into East and West Kootenay, and composed of the Nelson, Trail Creek and Goat River mining districts. To the west of these lies the rapidly developing Kettle River or Boundary country, through which the Canadian Pacific is now building a branch railway, which will give a much needed outlet for its rich ores. All these sections are bounded on the south by the international line, the States passing inward from the Coast being Washington, Idaho and Montana, all great mineral producing States.

Revelstoke is on the main line of the C. P. R., 2,527 miles west of Montreal and 379 miles east of Vancouver. Leaving Revelstoke in the morning, over the branch line, one is soon speeding along the eastern bank of the Columbia, with the Selkirks close at hand; while across the river looms the Columbia or Gold Range, with its snow-capped summits now right ahead, now behind us, as we sweep round the sudden curves. A run of twenty-eight miles brings us to Arrowhead, at the head of Upper Arrow Lake, where we are transferred to the elegant C. P. R. lake steamer Rossland. She makes the trip from Arrowhead to Robson at the foot of the Arrow Lakes, 165 miles, every second day, alternating with the Kootenay, a steamer of similar construction, thus making a daily service, Sunday excepted.

The Arrow Lakes, Upper and Lower, are expansions of the Columbia River, and extend for 165 miles from north to south. They are of an average width of three to five miles. The scenery along their shores is grand in the extreme. The waters are clear and sparkling, and fish of large size lurk in their depths. Eleven miles below Arrowhead, on the eastern shore, is Halcyon Springs, a health and pleasure resort, with its large hotel and bath-houses perched on the side of the mountain. Fifty-two miles farther bring us to Nakusp, where we leave the steamer, as we are to go in via the Slokan Lake route. Boarding a train on Nakusp and Slokan branch, we are soon climbing the mountain. As we swing round a curve high among trees, we see the steamer fast disappearing on her trip down the lake—the white steamer, the bright sunshine, the sparkling waters, and the peaks of the Gold Range athwart the western sky, making a beautiful picture. Still climbing, we finally reach the summit where the line traverses the shore of a pretty mountain lake known as Summit Lake. Soon we begin to descend, and after a run of twenty-eight miles the first view of Slokan Lake bursts upon our astonished vision. Many scenes of natural beauty have we beheld, but none can excel, few equal, the exquisite charm of this first glimpse of the lake from the mountainside. To the right the vast bulk of Valhalla Mountain towers forbiddingly aloft; while to the left, Slokan and Silver Mountains are bathed in the golden glory of the late afternoon. Nestling almost at one's feet is the pretty