

THE KOOTENAY VALLEYS

Are guarded in a great measure by the Rocky Mountains from the cold north and east winds, and the climate is also tempered by the warm breezes of the Pacific Ocean, the "Chinook Wind," which render it healthful and pleasant. The snow-fall is light, though at times the cold is severe, but cattle and horses remain out all winter without shelter or fodder and keep fat and healthy. The springs are early, the summer warm and free from frosts, and the winters moderate both in duration and range of cold. The soil is good, producing fine crops of wheat, oats, peas, garden produce, etc.; tomatoes, cucumbers, and such delicate growths do well anywhere in the valley. Hop culture has not been tried extensively as yet, but wherever the vines are grown as ornaments to houses they thrive surprisingly, proving that more extensive planting would be both safe and profitable. The timber is most valuable, including yellow pine, fir and tamarac, the former being a most useful and handsome tree, frequently attaining a girth of twenty feet. Large deposits of excellent steam coal have been discovered in the Crow's Nest Pass, and it is confidently believed that gold exists in paying quantities at many points in the valley, including Bul River, Gold Creek, Moojia Creek, etc., now in the hands of enterprising companies. During 1863 and 1864 there was an invasion of miners and much placer gold was taken out, over three million dollars being credited to Wild Horse Creek alone. From latest reports, the prospects for future successful quartz mining appear most encouraging.

• The Lower Kootenay Valley, which ends with Kootenay Lake, is a beautiful sheet of water some 90 miles in length. The river varies from 600 to 700 feet in width, and the average depth is about 45 feet, rendering navigation by the largest steamers safe and easy, the current being slow. Lofty elm and cottonwood trees line the banks, leaving the valley an unbroken expanse of tall grass, without a tree until the level ends at the pine-covered hills on either side. Above these hills rise the mountains to a height varying from 1,500 to 5,800 feet. There is no question but that these valleys contain some of the most productive land known. The valleys are rich in minerals. On Kootenay Lake immense galena deposits have been discovered, containing a valuable proportion of silver, and mining is easy. On Toad Mountain, near Kootenay Lake outlet, rich deposits of copper and silver have been located and promise to be of great importance. Two small steamers at present ply upon the lower Kootenay River and the Lake, and offer a delightful trip. The lake is claimed to be one of the most beautiful in the world, and is a very attractive point for sportsmen. In its clear depths are land-locked salmon, and on the mountains in the vicinity are found grizzly bear, mountain goat and caribou.

THE BIG BEND OF THE COLUMBIA.

Between the Gold Range and the Selkirks is the west side of the great loop of the Columbia River, that extends north above the 52nd parallel. This bend drains a gold region not yet well explored, but which has every indication of great mineral richness, and certainly possesses an amazing quantity of fine timber. Within easy reach of the Canadian Pacific Railway is enough timber to supply all the vast treeless plains east of the Rockies for generations to come. Gold has been found in paying quantities at many points north of the Bend, and indications of it on the Illecilliwaet River and Beaver Creek.