

**IMPORTANT MINING DEAL.****Westminsterites Bond their Claims on Skookumchuck to Toronto Parties for \$100,000.**

Details of an important mining deal, in which New Westminster parties are interested, have been made public, and show that the mines of this district are meeting with recognition from the outside world.

Some weeks ago Mr. Peter Ryan, the well-known Ontario contractor, was in the city, but it was not known exactly what he was after. He is one of the proprietors of the stage line between Cariboo and Ashcroft, but while in the Province he took a look about him in the interests of Toronto capitalists and inspected several mining properties in this district. Through the medium of Mr. John Crean, manager of the Hotel Guichenon, Mr. Ryan has now bonded six claims on Harrison Lake. These claims are all owned by the Skookumchuck Mining Co., Limited, all New Westminster people, and are situated on Tipella Mountain, adjoining those of the Fire Mountain Company.

About \$1,000 worth of development work has been done on these claims, which comprise 300 acres, and a shaft has been sunk 41 feet, and is in free gold. In fact, free gold is found all over the claims, and assays have showed values from \$25 to \$210 per ton, chiefly in gold, but carrying silver and peacock copper.

The amount for which the claims have been bonded is \$100,000, and a substantial amount was paid down yesterday to bind the bargain. If on investigation the purchase is to be completed, the sellers will be offered a choice of stock in the new company. At all events it looks as if each of the original owners would make about \$15,000 by the deal, and the whole district will be indirectly benefited.

**AMERICAN COAL PRODUCTION IN 1896.**

The report of Statistician E. W. Parker on the production of coal in the United States in 1896 has just been issued. The total production of coal of all kinds in the country during that year amounted to 171,416,390 long tons, or 191,986,357 short tons, and having a total value of \$196,640,166. With the exception of 1895, when the output reached 193,117,630 short tons, this was the largest production in its history. The anthracite produced amounted to 54,346,081 tons, a decrease of 3,653,256 tons as compared with 1895. The bituminous output was 137,640,276 tons, an increase of 2,522,083 tons.

The price of bituminous coal at mines has steadily fallen since 1887. In that year the average in the United States was \$1.12 per ton. The next two years it was about \$1. Then for three years it was fairly steady at 99 cents. In 1893 it dropped to 96

cents, in 1894 to 91 cents, in 1895 to 86 cents, and in 1896 to 83 cents per ton, the lowest ever recorded.

Anthracite coal operators, on the contrary, by reducing their output and by associated effort, secured \$1.85 per long ton for the marketed product, as compared with \$1.72 in 1895.

There were eighteen states and territories whose product exceeded 1,000,000 tons. Nine reported an increased production in 1896 and nine a decrease. Those in which the production increased were Alabama, Colorado, Indian Territory, Illinois, Maryland, Montana, Tennessee, Washington and West Virginia. Those in which the production decreased were Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wyoming.

Pennsylvania led with 36 per cent. of the total bituminous output, against 37 per cent. in 1895. Illinois was second with 14 per cent., against 13 per cent. in 1895. West Virginia and Ohio were practically tied for third place with 9½ per cent. each, the former leading by a few thousand tons. Alabama held fifth place with 4.2 per cent.

In 1896 there were 2,599 bituminous mines, excluding small banks, employing 237,665 men an average of 192 days. In 1895, 2,555 mines reported, employing 239,962 men an average of 194 days.

The world's production of coal amounted in 1896 to 660,550,426 short tons, to which aggregate Great Britain contributed 218,804,611 tons; the United States, 191,986,357 tons; Germany, 123,906,391 tons; Austria-Hungary, 35,985,664 tons; France, 32,300,537 tons; Belgium, 23,375,726 tons; and Russia, 10,005,210 tons. The world's output in 1895 was 643,108,705 tons; in 1894, 609,344,362 tons; in 1893, 581,250,481 tons. For ten years the percentage produced by the United States has varied between 26.59 and 31.37.

**METAL QUOTATIONS.**

NEW YORK, Dec. 2.—Copper—quiet; brokers' price, \$10¾; exchange price, \$10.75 to \$10.85. Lead—firm, brokers' price 3½c; exchange price, \$3.75 to \$3.80.

Bar silver, 59½ c. per oz; Mexican dollars, 40½c; silver certificates, 59½c.—Ex.

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MINES REPORTED ON AND MANAGED

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