

\$75,436,101 is credited to the placer fields and \$97,121,786 to the quartz or lode claims. The total production of copper, valued at \$145,741,000, exceeds by nearly fifty million dollars the production of lode gold, though the combined value of lode and placer gold holds first place in the metallies.

In the production of placer gold, Central British Columbia has occupied a most important position. The discovery of this alluring metal on the lower Fraser river and the consequent rush of miners, prospectors and fortune-seekers into the then unorganized interior led to the establishment of the Crown colony of British Columbia in 1858. The yield of placer gold in 1858 has been estimated at \$705,000, and for the ten succeeding years at \$18,823,198, an average of nearly three millions a year. The heaviest year was 1863, with \$31,913,563 to its credit.

The Cariboo gold-fields of Central British Columbia became the Mecca of an army of gold-seekers and a by-word in every civilized land. Creeks of abnormal richness were quickly washed out and many fortunes were amassed in a single season. This famous field, embracing an area of some 7,000 square miles, has produced about \$45,000,000 in gold, or over half the placer gold of the entire province. It still has an average annual output of about \$200,000. Barkerville is the centre of the field, with Quesnel the local distributing point from the Fraser river, and Prince George or Ashcroft the points of rail connection.

Another Central British Columbia gold-field that sprang into early prominence is the Omineca district, lying immediately north of the Arctic-Pacific divide. Production from this field was never as extensive, by any means, as from the Cariboo, nevertheless at one time it was the scene of great activity and many rich diggings were discovered. At present a few placer miners are working on various creeks, including Omineca, Manson and Nation rivers. The total output of the Omineca has been estimated at \$750,000, though exact records are not available.

Associated with the names of these two gold fields is also that of Cassiar. Cariboo, Omineca, and Cassiar were well known names fifty years ago. The Cassiar district, however, centered more northerly and easterly, Telegraph Creek, on the Stikine river, being a favorite point of entry. The headwaters of the Skeena flow from these regions.

The lack of roads into these fields, the great distances to be traversed in order to reach them, the difficulties of transportation and the high cost of supplies, together with the crude and primitive mining methods employed decreed that only the richest and most easily worked claims could be mined at a profit. Hence when the cream of the district was taken off mining waned. The introduction of hydraulic mining has resulted in maintaining the industry where otherwise it would have almost died away and the bulk of gold recovered in the Cariboo district in recent years has been obtained by this process. Costs of operating, however, have advanced tremendously in recent years, while the gold value has remained stationary, so that the actual profits have been small.

The provincial Department of Mines has adopted a very active policy for furthering the mining industry. A district inspector and two resident engineers are permanently stationed in Central British Columbia, namely, Thos. J. Shenton, district inspector, at Prince Rupert, J. D. Galloway, resident engineer, at Hazelton, and Geo. A. Cloutier, resident engineer, at Prince Rupert. Other geological and mining officials from the provincial Department of Mines, and several geologists from the federal Department of Mines at Ottawa have from year to year conducted investigations into

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