

THE KOOTENAY DISTRICT.

The Kootenay District, including the Lower and Upper Kootenay valleys and the Columbia valley, is a most valuable region now attaining considerable prominence. Lying in the south-eastern corner of British Columbia, it is separated from the North-West Territories of Canada by the Rocky Mountains, and is in shape a huge triangle with a base line of some 150 miles resting on the 49° No. lat., which forms the international boundary between that portion of British Columbia and Montana, Idaho and Washington State. About the centre of this triangle is the Selkirk range of mountains, bending like a horseshoe with the open ends towards the south, and within the horseshoe lies the Lower Kootenay Valley, while the two remaining valleys comprising the Kootenay District, i.e., the Upper Kootenay and the Columbia valleys, are outside of this horseshoe, isolating the Selkirks from the Rocky Mountains and Gold Range. These valleys are formed respectively by the Columbia and Kootenay rivers, and in addition to splendid timber, possess considerable wealth of minerals and much valuable land admirably suited to agriculture and grazing purposes.

The Kootenay is reached from Revelstoke, a station on the line of the C. P. R. The steamer (during the season) leaves Revelstoke twice a week and goes via the Columbia and Arrow Lakes to Robson, a run of 165 miles through charming scenery, returning by the same route. From Robson the Columbia and Kootenay Railway and Navigation Company, runs up the valley of the Kootenay to Kootenay Lake where another steamboat can be taken to the numerous gold, silver and copper mines. From Robson a steamer runs to the Little Dalles of the Columbia, where rail communication is made for Spokane Falls, Washington and other points in the United States.

THE VALLEY OF THE COLUMBIA.

This south-east corner of the province is remarkable for its pasturage lands. It is a hilly country with rich grass lands and good soil. There is a great deal of prairie land, and about an equal quantity of forest in which pine, cypress and cedar grow luxuriantly, as well as birch and other deciduous trees. An excellent tract of farming country is a belt along the Kootenay River, varying from two to ten miles in width. Here the soil is light and bunch-grass grows. There is a series of lakes near the river where the valley, which is about fifteen miles wide, has a heavy soil, producing grain and vegetables of the ordinary kind in abundance. Salmon from the Columbia make their way in great numbers into the Kootenay. The ordinary brook trout are plentiful in the mountain streams. The country produces some of the best timber in the province, and is a good district for large game.

Considerable placer mining has been done in the Kootenay District, and recently some rich quartz ledges have been discovered. The district is rich in minerals and valuable discoveries are made from time to time.

An English company is engaged in a scheme for widening the outlet of the Kootenay Lake, with a view to reclaiming about 40,000 acres of first-class alluvial land, on which they intend to form a colony of ex-officers and other selected persons. This district is well timbered, yet a splendid grazing country; it has a sufficient rainfall, yet is out of the constant rainfall peculiar to the mountains further north; it is a good game country, produces cereals and roots in abundance, and is within easy reach of rail. Gold and silver have been found and mined in this southern as well as in the northern parts of the province.