

to 3,500 cubic yards of gravel daily. The creek has been worked by Chinamen in their primitive way for years, and the fact that they are anxious to return indicates that the supply of gold is not yet exhausted.

There are other placer claims on China Creek, notably the Cataract, upon which considerable outlay has been made, but through loss by fire the company is not in a position to commence hydraulicing.

Within a few miles of the Duke of York claim is Mineral Hill, elevation about 3,750 feet above sea level, where many claims have been located. At the Alberni Consolidated a shaft has been sunk seventy-five feet on a free milling quartz vein well defined, and a tunnel has been run in 130 feet to tap it. Work is progressing day and night. The *Tees* had on board a thirty h.p. boiler for this claim, and stamp mill machinery was already on the ground and expected to be in operation within six weeks. Two thousand eight hundred pounds of quartz from this claim tested by milling at Victoria produced \$54.00 free gold, while the concentrates assayed \$20.00 to the ton of ore.

Many other claims are located on McLaughlin Range, on Franklin, Granite, Coleman and Chesnucknat Creeks, and elsewhere, and I have it on the highest authority that some of the veins are true fissure. Extensive development is now progressing on some of the claims, but many others are held by the locators who have not the means to work them. This opening for capital is especially deserving the attention of Victorians who will be the first to benefit by the early establishment of important mining camps within easy reach of this city.

The erection of a smelter at Victoria is another matter worthy of consideration. Immense bodies of Barclay Sound ore will require smelting, and the natural conditions of distance and water carriage should ensure the successful operation of the plant.

You will judge more definitely from the following figures what progress is being made. Previous to 1895 the district of Alberni was not reported with the returns from districts of British Columbia, but since then 539 claims have been recorded, 211 free miners' certificates issued, 202 transfers of claims made and 71 certificates of work granted. But for the uncertainty as to the claim owners' rights to the minerals discovered in the E. & N. Railway belt doubtless more pros-