

there are mostly low grade, which requires more capital to work. But the mines may be classed as of a permanent character for investment, and not a few look upon East Kootenay as the coming great mining region of British Columbia.

The mining of precious metals in British Columbia has now entered upon a new era. Capital is flowing into the country. Machinery of the most approved kind is being brought in and put to use. Skilled engineers and managers are being employed to direct the work, and development everywhere is going on with amazing rapidity. The great wealth, which has lain dormant for ages in the rocks and rivers of British Columbia, is now being utilized for the good of mankind, and the work of the pioneer miners is bearing fruit for the benefit of our great Dominion.

British Columbia as a Field for Investment.

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British Columbia has long been well known as a great timber and fish country. It is true it first became prominent on account of the discovery of gold, but it was placer gold, and after the first excitement and early working was over it gradually declined in importance as a gold field, while its other resources came to the fore. Its exports in coal, lumber and fish exceeded last year \$8,000,000, which is over \$1,000 per head of its white population, a remarkable showing, more especially when we consider that the resources of the province have just been tapped as yet. It is quite safe to say that, within three years, by the addition of gold and silver ore exports, that large sum will be doubled. It will be as a mining country that British Columbia will be best known during the coming years.

At the present time it is quite impossible to predict, with any degree of certainty, which district will take the lead so as to dominate in influence—whether Kootenay, or Cariboo, or Yale, or Vancouver Island, or the Mainland Coast. So little is really known of the real prospects by discovery that it is well to suspend judgment. Four years ago the Slocan division, the banner camp of the province, was regarded by prospectors as barren. Only a small part of Kootenay has been exploited and within a few years, where before minerals were not even suspected, such promising camps as Trail Creek, Nelson, Lardeau, Trout Lake, etc., have arisen. The Blue Bell, on Kootenay Lake, was known for many years and was a subject of much litigation, but, apart from that, Hot Spring Camp, where a tier of rich mineral formations exist, leading us as far up as the Skyline, was, until recently, an unknown quantity. What will develop out of the great coal beds and petroleum deposits and the silver and gold of East Kootenay, as yet largely inaccessible, one cannot foresee. Southern Yale has important gold veins, silver, platinum, as well as placers, which may turn it into a mining camp of great importance. Kamloops is the centre of a very large and important district, which has iron, coal, placer and quartz leads in abundance. The great mother lode of the \$50,000,000 of gold that came out of Cariboo has not been discovered. It exists as surely as the gold that came out of it existed. The promoters of the large hydraulic enterprises in that district expect to get \$50,000,000 more by the newer methods.

Vancouver Island, for substantial results, has, so far, been the chief mineral producer, its vast coal beds now yielding 1,000,000 tons a year. The Alberni district is coming forward into promise with quartz propositions, and rich iron deposits have been located at Barclay Sound and other points. There are now wide coal areas yet untouched, and the whole interior and northern part of the Island is practically a *terra incognita*.

The whole coast of the mainland, with its innumerable islands and indents, is furnishing fresh evidence of extended distribution of economic metals, iron, coal, gold and, if we may include them, building stones or constructive material. Gold claims have been located on Phillip's Arm and development is going on. Texada Island is a veritable *olla podrida* of minerals in curious geological

association, but undoubtedly of richness and extent only faintly exploited. Queen Charlotte Islands are unknown quantities, but known to possess important coal formations, both bituminous and anthracite. The gold excitement of British Columbia occurred there, though the gold was all found in a pocket on the water's edge. Rich silver ore was found there, but the lead was lost.

Then we penetrate Cassiar, a vast district, which gave us the Omineca and Dease Lake diggings, out of which six or seven millions were taken, and the Yukon, where a rush is now being made, and the great country beyond on the Arctic slope, all of which are gold bearing. There is scarcely a river or stream in British Columbia that will not give colors of gold.

Such a wide distribution of minerals, precious and base, and in such frequent and important occurrence, can scarcely, if at all, be paralleled. Only a very small portion of the country has been prospected and very little of it thoroughly, and the importance which attaches to the fact consists in this, that as settlement and population advance, and the mining industry develops, new and valuable discoveries will continue to be made. We have most of the metals in abundance, and, as to the principal of which we lack, viz., tin and nickel, there is ample room for their existence, and formations favorable to their occurrence are not unknown. Nickel has been discovered, but not in extent to base large expectations upon it. Concerning a wide area of British Columbia, there is much pioneer work for the geologist and prospector, roads and railways before being introduced to the attention of the capitalists; but there already exists in the more settled districts a field most favorable for investment; about the value of the mineral properties therein, the extent and richness of the ore, there cannot be any doubt. The mine owners of Southern Kootenay, where communication is now established, have properties which have paid from the start and which are yielding large profits despite high freights, long hauls to the smelter, dearness of labor, and all the rest of it incident to a new country full of physical obstacles to success. The value of the ores per ton, if it were not the actual price realized at the smelter, to an experienced mining man would appear very much like fiction, but regarding which there can be no room for question.

Within a year \$1,500,000 worth of ore has been shipped out of Kootenay and in four-and-a-half months of that time \$800,000 worth went out. Considering that four years ago most of the producing mines were absolutely unknown, the record is not a bad one. There are hundreds of good claims that can be secured on reasonable terms. What is true of Kootenay is true of properties in various parts of British Columbia, to which reference has been made. Kootenay, being most prominent in the public mind, is used as an illustration, but it is not at all certain that Kootenay will always take the lead, because, as stated previously, it is a subject about which it is impossible to predict, in view of the wide distribution of minerals and the increasing probability of new discoveries.

Regarding investment in mines in British Columbia, extracts from an article in the *British Trade Journal* (reproduced elsewhere) are recommended for perusal. The writer has evidently struck the keynote in appealing to the British investor through his trade instincts, and he also points out what has often been remarked, that the British capitalist usually waits for somebody else to develop the mine before investing, and pays a pretty stiff price, the cream of the transaction going to the promoters, instead of doing as the Americans do, entering upon development on their own behalf and reaping the whole of the profits. As it is, in Kootenay Americans are the principal mine owners and have a number of the best properties. Without any doubt, they have in view selling out in time to the British capitalist at fancy figures. The latter, who is paying so much attention to South Africa just now, should examine more carefully the prospects for investing in British Columbia. Under our laws the capitalist, of whatever nationality, has an absolute guarantee that his rights will be thoroughly protected.