

Mining News.

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FEBRUARY 24, 1897.

INCREASED SIZE.

Owing to a press of matter, our subscribers will find that this week's issue is enlarged to sixteen pages.

B. C. MINERAL PRODUCTION.

A return has been brought down in the Legislature showing the value of the mineral output of British Columbia for a number of years. There has been a steady increase from 1890, when the product was worth \$2,668,000 to 1896, when the product was worth \$7,146,000. The entire mineral output is shown to be worth \$109,931,000. The output of the various districts for the past two years is given as follows:

	1895.	1896.
Cariboo	\$ 282,000	\$ 384,050
Caslar	22,575	21,000
Kootenay East	17,505	154,427
Lillooet	40,663	33,665
Yale	241,581	206,078
Kootenay West.....	2,223,206	4,002,735
Other districts	10,000	15,000
Total	\$2,834,000	\$4,816,955
Placer gold	\$ 481,683	\$ 544,026

The above figures scarcely need any comment on our part. It appears from them, however, that the output of minerals from from British Columbia, which includes gold, silver, and copper, has for the year 1896, increased by almost double the amount of the preceding year. It is significant that this great increase has been almost wholly in the east and west Kootenay, the only districts which were in a sufficiently advanced state of development last year to admit of actual production of gold and silver in any quantities. This, too, in the face of almost superhuman drawbacks and difficulties, which are now being one by one, slowly but surely swept away. In 1894 operations in quartz mining in British Columbia were in their infancy and there were practically no developed mines. In 1895 two or three had begun to produce in the face of the grav-

est difficulties. Last year we find two or three gold and a few silver mines added to the list of producers. While in the matter of prospects and claims, we find an almost incredible increase over the records of the previous years. There cannot be any reasonable doubt but that hundreds of mining prospects have been so far developed in the year 1896 that it is absolutely certain that there will be at least one hundred mines producing gold and silver before the end of the present year. We believe that the next few months will prove to a conclusion that the estimates of the mineral output of British Columbia for the year 1896, have been greatly underestimated. From the very nature of things, it is impossible to make anything like a correct estimate of future outputs, where new properties are being opened up and are coming into bearing, over a wide area, in an ever increasing proportion.

One day a new locality is opened and work is started on two or three claims. Beyond this, nothing else is worked until success has crowned the first efforts. Within six months or a year it becomes a certainty that the district is rich in minerals and there is at once a rush of prospectors to take up every inch of ground for miles around. Simultaneously work is started on hundreds of claims, many of which afterwards turn out in due course, producing mines. This, however, requires a space of four or five years. The same process is going on in other districts. The result of all this is that at the end of the above period, instead of two or three partly developed mines, there are hundreds of rich mines and partly developed properties. Yet, at the time the first mines began to produce their first gold and silver there was no possible way by which the future product of so many districts could have been estimated, even approximately. Such is the situation in British Columbia to-day. There are not one or two mining districts, but dozens of them, all containing more or less rich mineral deposits. South Africa and Australia are to-day producing about \$40,000,000 annually. We venture to predict that within four years from date that Canada's output will amount to as much as either country.

THE EVENING STAR.

The new shaft on the Evening Star is now down 25 feet, and shows a good body of ore all the way down and on the bottom. The ore at first was highly silicious, and a good deal mixed, but now it has changed to a nearly solid sulphide. The assays have been encouraging from the first.

This shaft was started a few weeks ago by Managing Director H. B. Nichols, when he took charge of the property. Bert Cook is foreman, and the work is being done in good shape. There is considerable ore of shipping grade now on the dump, and it is questionable if the Evening Star ever looked as well as it does now.—Miner.

RAILWAY WANTED.

A copy of a proposed petition has been submitted to us from the people of Thunder Bay, Seine River, Rainy Lake and River, Port Arthur, Fort William and Alberton, asking the Dominion Government to grant assistance towards a railway line from Port Arthur, along the Seine River and Rainy Lake valleys to Fort Frances and ultimately into Winnipeg.

The wonderful mineral prospects of this district demand the attention of the Government for it appears likely that this will be the greatest mineral centre in the Dominion. Under these circumstances the Government are not only justified in giving assistance but would be culpable to withhold it. We have urged the necessity of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway because of its necessity to the development of British Columbia. The line now under discussion is equally necessary to this district and will prove lucrative to Canada at large. It is merely a question of building it at an early date or being compelled to do so later on.

RAT PORTAGE PROSPECT.

This week we had visits from Mr. L. W. Partridge, of Detroit, Mich., and Mr. H. H. Beck, of Winnipeg, who are both interested in the Rat Portage district. Both spoke most enthusiastically about the prospects of this newly opened district, which they believe is destined to become a great gold producing centre. It is so very new that Mr. Partridge said that only a couple of years ago it would have been possible to acquire every mining claim in the district for five or ten thousand dollars, while last year undeveloped claims were selling for the same sum, and the price was not too high for some of them, for instance the Mikado bought for \$25,000 only a few months ago had already yielded the full purchase price, and there was \$75,000 worth of ore in the dump. The Cornucopia had been sold for \$100,000 to Sir Roderick Cameron and his friends. The most famous vein, so far, was that known as the Scramble vein which have been traced for eight miles, and was of great width and high value.

As Mr. Partridge has had considerable experience in gold mining in Nova Scotia and other mining districts, his opinion is of great weight, and he and Mr. Beck predict a great future for this district.

THE FISHER MAIDEN.

The Fisher Maiden, situated on Four-Mile creek, tributary to the Slocan, now employs 15 men, working double shifts. At present the company are cross-cutting tunnel, also stoping and knocking down ore. Frank Watson, the owner of this property, tells me that one shipment made averaged 346 ounces of silver. On account of the company making daily shipments of two cars of ore to the smelter, twelve rawhides are kept running, making one round trip each from the mine to point of shipment.—Mail-Empire.