

two story building, containing a public hall and reading room. Aside from the extensive coal interests, there are a saw mill, a shipyard, a brewery, soda water factory, tannery, and the usual number of commercial and industrial enterprises. A volunteer fire company is ever ready for duty. An institution of the city is the *Free Press*, a weekly journal devoted to the interests of Nanaimo and

its great coal industry. The population somewhat exceeds two thousand, and is steadily increasing.

The towns of North and South Wellington lie near Departure bay, opposite the Nanaimo harbor, and are less than a mile distant from each other. These are at the seat of mining operations, and consist chiefly of the works and residences of the miners.

MINERALS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

THERE exist, within the limits of British Columbia, large deposits of the precious and useful metals, many of which have been systematically and profitably mined for years, while others are only awaiting the development of which they are capable, to become a source of great wealth to the province. The list is a long one, embracing gold, silver, copper, iron, coal, lead, cinnabar, platinum, antimony, bismuth, plumbago, limestone, marble and salt. Of these, the most extensively worked and valuable are gold and coal.

Gold mining first began on the Fraser river, about 1856. The gold on the river bars and benches is very fine, and requires the use of quicksilver. From Hope to above Alexandria, the river is bordered by a series of benches, one rising above another, throughout which this fine gold is found. The first miners took out large quantities of dust, and the Fraser still yields its annual supply of gold. The mining along the stream, at present, is carried on chiefly by Chinamen and by the white settlers, who engage in it at favorable opportunities, at

times when their labor is not required on their farms. The gold farther up the stream is coarser. The Quesnel mines were discovered in 1859, and the rich gold fields of Cariboo in 1860. Cariboo has remained, to this day, the great placer mining region of British Columbia. The Omineca mines, still farther north than Cariboo, have also added their quota to the gold product, but the amount of land travel necessary to reach them, and the consequent high price of everything, have served to keep back their development. Rich diggings were discovered about ten years ago on Dease and Thibert creeks, in the Cassiar region, in the extreme northwestern corner of the province. These have since been worked with good results, being more accessible than Omineca.

In the southern end of the province, are the Similkameen and Kootenay regions. The former lies along the international line, west of Osoyoos lake, and has, of late, developed rich placer diggings. Exceedingly rich quartz ledges have been found, and capital from both sides of the line is being invested for