

Mr. H. G. McConnell, sent out by the Canadian government to explore the Peace river country, has reported that the whole country between the Peace and Athabasca, north of the Loon—an area of about 25,000 square miles—is generally forested, mainly with spruce and poplar, and is everywhere characterized by an abundance of lakes, and of muskegs and marshes. Strips of excellent land are usually found along the main rivers surrounding many of the lakes, and in the interior many areas, often equal in size to an eastern county, might be selected which are well adapted for cultivation. Gold was found in many of the bars along the Peace river, and in several places in sufficient quantities to deserve some attention. Four miles above the mouth of Battle river is a large bar, nearly a mile long, from which fifteen or twenty colors of fine gold were obtained by washing a few handfuls of the mixed gravel and sand in an ordinary frying pan. The bar was tried at several points, and always with the same results. A small stream descends from the plateau on the opposite side of the river, and by leading its waters across the river, which is here a thousand feet wide, the bar might be easily and inexpensively worked on a large scale. A few miles farther up the river another bar was examined which yielded from twenty to forty colors when washed in the way just mentioned. He reports finding also large quantities of gas and oil.

Articles of agreement were recently filed in the office of the secretary of state between the Great Falls & Canada Railway Co. and the Alberta Railway & Coal Co. The Alberta company is surety for the Great Falls company in the project of building a railroad from a point in the county of Choteau, ten miles west of the west butte of the Sweet Grass hills, thence southerly to the Marias river, crossing near Fort Conrad, thence across the Dry Fork, thence to Great Falls. This is a new road which is to connect the Great Northern and Canadian Pacific. Ground has already been broken, and the work is to be pushed rapidly to completion. It will prove of great benefit to Montana and open up a large section of the northern part of the state. The Sand Coulee coal fields will furnish fuel for both roads, the mines of the Sweet Grass hills will be opened up, and a great extent of farming land settled up. The road in connecting with the Great Northern at Great Falls will give Helena direct communication with the Canadian northwest.—*Helena Independent*.

Two railway incorporations recently made in Idaho materially affect the Cour d'Alene mining region. The Wallace & Sunset Railroad Co. was organized to build, equip and operate a steam railroad from the town of Wallace, in Shoshone county, in a northeasterly direction up Nine Mile creek to its west fork, a distance of about five miles, and branches up different gulches to adjacent mining properties, aggregating in length about twenty miles. The capital stock of the concern is \$500,000. The other incorporation is the Wardner Mining Railroad Co., to build and operate a railroad from Wardner Junction in a southwesterly direction through the town of Wardner to one or more of the mines southwest of that town. The total length of this line, with branches, will be fifteen miles. This organization has a capitalization of \$500,000, and its chief officers are the same as of the Wallace & Sunset, G. W. Dickinson, a Northern Pacific official, being president. Both roads will be built this year.

The Columbia River Navigation Co. has bought the steamer *Kootenai*, now lying at the Little Dalles, and will begin regular trips as soon as the water rises a little. The company is build-

ing a new steamer at Revelstoke for the same trade, and will run them both from Revelstoke to Sproat's landing. Eventually they will extend their trip to the Little Dalles, to connect with the Spokane & Northern, giving them a through route from Spokane to the Canadian Pacific. This company will begin the construction of the road from Sproat's landing to Kootenai lake at once, and will have it open for traffic during the present season. It gets a grant of 200,000 acres of land for doing this, and is asked to deposit \$50,000 with the government of British Columbia as a guaranty that the work will be finished in the time agreed upon.

Yesterday a new mining company was organized in this city, and will be known as the Gold Hill Mining Co. The following officers were elected: Hon. Thomas C. Marshall, president; J. B. Latimer, vice-president; Canby Morrison, secretary; N. B. Donley, treasurer, and F. Jamieson, superintendent. The capital stock of the company was fixed at \$500,000, in shares of \$1.00. The property of the company consists of a group of six mines, located at Eight Mile. Two of the mines are now producing paying ore. The principal vein is of free milling, gold bearing ore, and is sixteen feet wide. The quality of the ore is excellent, averaging \$28 per ton the entire breadth of the vein. The work of development is being pushed ahead rapidly, and it is very possible that in a short time a mill will be erected.—*Missoulian*.

From a very reliable authority it has been ascertained that there is a movement on foot which will greatly benefit Thompson Falls. The Montana Fire Clay Co., which is an organization consisting of a number of Butte and Anaconda capitalists, is about to make extensive preparations for the manufacture of fire brick and brick for paving purposes, as soon as a perfect title is secured to the land on which the fire clay bed is situated. For some time past the Anaconda and Butte smelters have been using Thompson Falls fire clay, and with the best results. If the present plans of the company are carried out, Thompson Falls will be greatly benefited, and will supply all the great smelters of the state with fire clay and brick.—*Missoulian*.

The "North Pacific Almanac and Statistical Hand Book for 1900" has been received. It is a volume of 224 pages containing a vast amount of information, both descriptive and statistical, about Oregon, Washington, Idaho, British Columbia and Alaska as they are known to-day. It is a valuable book for every person desiring information about this region. Price, fifty cents. Printed by David Steel for the North Pacific Publishing Co., Portland, Oregon.

It is expected that work will soon commence on the first railroad in Alaska, to run from Juneau to Chilkat, a distance of forty miles. Freight will be taken from Chilkat across the summit to the head waters of the Yukon by pack animals, where it will be transferred to steamers and sent down that mighty stream to the mines. There is a bill before congress removing the capital from Sitka to Juneau and establishing a land office in the latter city.

Coal has been discovered near Fort Orchard, the selected site of the proposed navy yard. Miners are sinking a ten-foot shaft over the vein and the indications are that the measure is an extensive one, which will be an important consideration in the establishment of the navy yard there. This adds to the wisdom of the selection.