

WEALTH OF THE YUKON.

Fifteen Millions of Dollars Will Be Cleaned Up This Year—Dawson City, With Ten Thousand People, Is the Greatest Mining Camp in the World—The Greatest Known Gravel Deposit—What the Districts Show.

The output of the mines of the Yukon district this year, while it has been between \$10,000,000 and \$15,000,000, has disappointed even the conservative estimates made last year, and based on the prospects then existing. Three things have contributed to shorten this spring's clean up: Canadian royalty, lack of men and of strengthening food. One of the most prominent civil engineers on the Yukon coast, who has spent this winter at the mines, has said:

"Considering the fact that less than 100 poorly fed men have gotten out this winter almost \$15,000,000, the Yukon has made a showing that is like to consideration as the greatest gravel deposit in extent and richness in the world. The placer mines of California in early days are only rivals."

The great riches of claims on French, Little and Big Skookum gulches to the wonder of mining men in the interior of Alaska. A claim owner on French gulch offers a standing bet of \$10,000 that he can rock out of his claim, single-handed, \$5,000 on any given day. The benches are old river benches, which have been broken up by an action of the earth. A continuation of the old river bed has been found near French creek, and while little prospecting has been done, it is thought that it will turn out very well.

El Dorado and Bonanza creeks have even all that was expected of them. More could be seen in actual results if the clean-up had been completed this spring. But hope that the royalties may be called off, and the drying up of the water which will be used in sluicing, has caused many big claim owners to leave about the dirt taken out on the camp. The wash-up has been completed on very few claims, and on several still can a statement be obtained to the real amount of the clean-up. This makes it impossible to state positively the output of the mines.

Of the less known streams, Dominion creek is giving evidence of mineral deposits which may make it known as the richest strike yet made. The conflict claims, owing to the two discoveries made, is about settled, and there is nothing to interfere with the development of the mines. Hunker creek is in placer, but, unlike the rest of the country, is spotted. Gold Bottom is not turning out as well as expected. Many other creeks which promise well have not been sufficiently developed to make an estimate of their wealth safe.

So many are the disadvantages in mining in the Northwest territory that attention is being once more directed

to mines on the American side. It is believed that many surprises are in store in this direction. Forty-mile creek has been relocated and many new claims recorded. Chicken creek, which has been known for the last two years, but not worked, will be developed this year. Canyon, Nugget gulch and Franklin creeks and the bars on Forty-mile will be worked by the hydraulic process, and there will be a good camp at the mouth of the river within two years.

American creek, 40 miles down from Forty-mile, is known as good; the ground is high and well laid out. Pans are taken running from 50 cents to \$5. The Misson creek district has three formations—placer, quartz and coal. At its mouth is Eagle City, in which will be established the United States barracks and the custom house.

Twenty miles below Eagle City is Star City, guarding the mouth of Seventy-mile river. The bars of this river has been worked for many years. On Barney creek, from three to six ounces to the day has been taken for the last three years. The other tributaries are as good as Barney, but it is only now, when people are spreading out, that much work will be done. A number of men are now at Star City getting their outfits up to the mines.

From Seventy-mile to Circle City has been prospected, and creeks are found here and there which give good indications. Coal and Sheep creeks promise especially well, and also the Charley river.

Circle City has been practically deserted since the rush to Dawson but the riches of Mastodon, Independence, Eagle, Deadwood and a dozen lesser gulches in the Birch creek district will revive the town. A moderate fortune can be made in that district in two years of hard work. Miners are returning to Birch creek from Dawson. They appreciate a district in which there is no royalty, no wood and log tax and no timber grants.

Across from Circle City is Jefferson creek, which is now being prospected for its whole length. It will be cheaply worked, because of being so readily accessible to the Yukon river.

Further down is the Minook creek district, which has been thoroughly advertised this year. It has developed some claims which have paid \$27,000, \$25,000 and \$15,000 for the winter's work. The country is to a great extent an unknown quantity. The discovery of Idaho bar, from which men have taken out \$100 a day with a rocker, is a great boom for the district, and the prospects of the camp are extremely bright.

A great country will be opened up in the Koyukuk. It has been known to miners for 10 years, and no pros-

pector who went in there has failed to bring out a good grubstake. The territory to be worked is of a vast extent, and offers many opportunities to the new comer. Tanana, Kuskoquim and Chandler rivers have all been brought prominently to the notice of mining men this year. All things considered, the American side would seem to be the place of the future.

As for Dawson City itself, it is unquestionably the greatest mining camp in the world. Frank Canton, United States deputy marshal in Circle City, and in former years an officer of the peace in many of the largest camps of the West, has said that nothing he has ever seen approaches Dawson as a model mining camp. Accustomed as he has been to dealing with the roughest class of criminals, his commendation of Dawson, as a law-abiding town, has great weight. The sidewalks are crowded with men and women from morning to night. People are even forced to walk in the middle of the streets to make progress. It is a great jumble of the good and the bad, and the only pledge of respectability required is regular attendance at church. Dawson's population has grown until it is now between 8,000 and 10,000.

Nine-tenths of the newcomers are not in the country to work, and when they find that success in the Klondike can only be bought by hard labor, they will be ready to come out. A great exodus of unsuccessful men will take place this fall, and the cities of the Pacific coast, to which these people will go, will be overrun with a rough, desperate and altogether undesirable class. They are now in Dawson as the advance guard of the more substantial men to follow. It is a repetition of the history of Circle City. When the Birch creek mines were discovered, two years ago, double the usual invoice of people went there, but soon left disgusted. Had they remained, they would have been in on the ground floor in the Klondike discovery.

The Cuban Machete.

Much has been said of the terrible machete, a deadly weapon indeed in the hands of a desperate man, and when used against a defenseless person. The machete was never intended for a weapon of warfare; it is an instrument of husbandry carried by the Cuban peasant in times of peace, and is his one familiar daily companion. It cuts his fire wood, aids him in building his hut, hews his path through the mangrove, and performs many other offices. The machete is a straight, heavy blade about two feet long, with a wooden or bone handle, having no guard; consequently it is utterly unsuited as a weapon to be used in a conflict with an armed man. The Cuban, of course, by reason of his long familiarity with the instrument, is an adept in its use, and its effect upon a group of unarmed workmen is truly terrible. It is in the foray against the defenseless and unarmed that the most serious work of the machete has been done in the island of Cuba—"Cuba as Seen from the Inside," by Osgood Welsh, in the August Century.

Strategic Value of Porto Rico.

Mr. Frederick A. Ober writes an article for the August Century on "The Island of Porto Rico." Mr. Ober says: Until it was discovered that Porto Rico possessed great value as a "strategic center" of naval operations, the fair island slumbered undisturbed, merely a link, and no important one, in the emerald chain that separates the Atlantic and the Caribbean. Suddenly naval folks became aware of its importance; they saw that while it borders on the Caribbean sea, yet it breathes the rough Atlantic waters; that it is equidistant, or about 1,000 miles, from Key West and Colon; from New York 1,500 miles, which is half the distance from Cadiz; 1,800 from Newport News, which is half the distance to the Canaries. It lies, in fact, at the very point that we should have selected for a coaling station, had we unrestricted choice of location. All the arguments that have been advanced for the acquisition of the island of St. Thomas, 60 miles distant, and for which at one time we were almost ready to pay seven million dollars, apply with tenfold force to Porto Rico, with its six good harbors to the one of St. Thomas, and its commercial as well as strategical potentialities.

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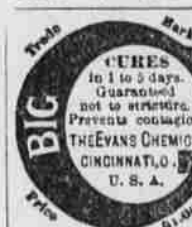
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