

British Columbia has been in part maintained by the successful operation of the Premier silver mine on the Portland canal, while the Nickel Plate property, operated by the Hedley Gold Mining Co., has been a consistent producer of gold bullion as well as arsenical gold concentrates, which are exported to United States for treatment. The IXL mine also exports high grade gold ore.

World's Production.—A sketch of the development of the gold-mining industry since the discovery of America may take the form of a reference to four successive periods. During the first period, extending from 1493 to 1760, the annual production averaged nearly 337,000 fine oz. The placer mining of Brazil and Colombia swelled the average output of the last sixty years of the period to about 606,000 oz. per year.

The production of Russia from placer mining was a considerable factor in the records of the next period, extending from 1761 to 1840, the country retaining first rank among the world's producers until 1837. The annual average production during the period was 5,655,000 oz.

The third period, extending from 1841 to 1890, was characterized by the remarkable discoveries of gold in California and Australia in 1848 and 1851 respectively. The annual average during the fifty years was 4,937,000 oz. For the first decade the average was 1,761,000 oz. and for the second 6,448,000, while the last decade shaded off to 5,201,000. The production of the period was contributed chiefly by the United States, Australia and Russia.

In the fourth period, extending from 1891 to the present time, the outstanding features were the entry of South Africa, an important and then the leading producer, and the phenomenal increase in the output of most of the gold-producing countries through the introduction of the cyanide process. The output was 6,320,000 fine oz. in 1891, and a steady increase was recorded until 1915, when a maximum of 22,675,000 oz. were produced. The activity in many of the large gold-fields having declined after 1915, a decreasing output was recorded for each year between 1915 and 1922, the production of the latter year being 15,440,000 oz. The Anglo-Boer war caused the only serious recession in the output of South Africa between 1888 and 1916, when the record yield of 9,296,000 fine oz. was obtained, this representing 42.3 p.c. of the world's total production of gold in that year. The output in 1922 was slightly in excess of 7,009,000 oz., forming 45.4 p.c. of the world's production.

The yield of gold in the United States is derived from placer mining, gold-quartz mining and milling, and recoveries at copper and other base metal refineries. The maximum output was attained in 1915, when 4,888,000 oz. were produced, the output in 1922 dropping to 2,363,000 oz., owing chiefly to the fact that the price of gold in the country remained fixed throughout the period, while higher operating costs obtained.

Canada occupied in 1921 the third place among the world's gold producers, the output being 926,329 fine oz. or 5.8 p.c. of the total production of the year. The same relative position was retained in 1922, and the percentage increased to 8.2, the Canadian production being 1,263,364 fine oz., as compared with the world estimate of 15,440,243 fine oz.

For detailed statistics of the gold production of the world for 1921 and 1922 see Table 18 of this section.