

ing and "rationing out," on fair terms the available food supply of Dawson, in order to make this last out so long as it is possible by careful allotment according to individual needs. The owners of the supplies will in such case be compensated in due course by the Dominion, and as most of those aided may be expected to pay for the food allotted, the net loss of the state will not be large. It seems however certain, despite the rather optimistic views of the Hon. Mr. Sifton, that state organized relief will need, at any risk and cost, to be got right into Dawson ere the end of two months from now, unless actual starvation, accompanied no doubt by the terrible dirt and famine fever, typhus, is to ensue.

The task will be very costly and difficult, but not impossible, and it seems likely that as most of the miners in the Yukon are American citizens, the United States Government may be willing to share part of the cost of saving these men. No time, however, must be lost if effective aid is to be rendered.

Another thing now made very clear by present circumstances in the Yukon is that as mine operators will there be largely impeded by lack of an adequate food supply to sustain hard work during long hours, the 1897-8 gold yield of the country will be far less than anticipated. This will cause ruinous loss to many who have bought claims on deferred payment terms, as they will be unable to meet their instalments, and it will also cause an unexpected deficiency in the "working capital" of many of the mine workers.

Under all these circumstances it seems to us the duty of the press of British Columbia to moderate, if it can, the undue eagerness of tens of thousands of people—many of them possessed of quite inadequate physique and resources—to enter the Yukon next year in doubtful quest of fortunes hard to bear.

It is now clear as the summer sun at noonday that there will be no scope in the Yukon next year, for half, or even less than half, the expected immigration of two hundred and fifty thousand persons. Such a number of immigrants will, nevertheless, probably make for that country, although it is to be hoped that very many thousands will be wisely persuaded to stop short of their doubtful goal. There will fortunately be scope next year for a big contingent of miners and other workers in our own Province, and of this opportunity many of the more fairly and fully equipped in physique and otherwise will we trust avail themselves.

THE BRITISH MINE INVESTOR.

The success of the Fern mine and expected early success of other free milling gold companies in our province mean much to British Columbia, as nothing so largely attracts the British mining investor

as free milling gold mining. This he fairly understands, but he has yet learned too little as to the getting of gold by smelting, when the gold happens to be associated with silver and copper, or lead. It is, however, to be hoped that there may be little of such swindling of the British investor in connection with our mining development, as has made itself so notorious in the promotion in London of Western Australian gold mining companies. That there will be some such deception is inevitable, abetted as it usually is by a large contingent of unscrupulous promoters in London, whose rascality is too easily condoned by the lax social and commercial code, that too largely holds amongst the money jobbers of the British metropolis. It is not too much to say that recent experience of B. C. flotations and attempted flotations in London proves this to the hilt, that there are many company promoters in the British metropolis whom society even deems respectable, who deliberately prefer to promote a more than half swindle and almost certain fiasco as regards profit earning, when it comes to founding a mining company. They can make more profit by huge underwriting and promoting commissions, necessarily offered in such cases, than they can by strictly legitimate propositions. There are of course many honest and business like promoters of mining, as of other companies in London, but they certainly don't seem to be in anything like a majority. Again and again is a modest and deserving British Columbia venture rejected in London in favor, apparently, of others that are too usually over capitalized for the benefit of underwriting and other promoters, and are also, to put it mildly, highly speculative and hazardous as regards the investor. Happily honest papers, like such great dailies as the Times and the Daily Chronicle, are now doing much to warn the British investor from specious schemes of plunder. They have, as a result, almost killed Klondike company promotions.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Dr. W. A. Richardson, who speaks from local personal experience, accompanied by professional insight, declares that Dawson City is the filthiest hole on earth. The place will next spring be uninhabitable. Yet this was to have been the leading centre of operations for that wretched Yukon company, which two of our B.C. cabinet ministers sought to patronize, but which nevertheless died—on its demerits—still-born.

It is satisfactory to learn that an early effort by the North-West Mounted Police in the Yukon may be directed towards the expulsion from Klondike of some three hundred and fifty gamblers and other toughs, who are, by the prostitution of an honorable adjective, termed "sporting men." If these human vermin were the only persons threatened