

will desire that the promoters of the enterprise should receive less than a fair and legitimate return from the earnings of the railway it is nevertheless somewhat disturbing to have no positive assurance that a check may be successfully exercised if needful for the protection of the public against the imposition of unduly heavy charges over this line. A further cause of uneasiness—but perhaps less well-founded—is the possibility that the C. P. R. having now by the acquisition of the Trail smelter identified the company with this industry in Southern British Columbia, will be inclined to place obstructions in the way of private or independent smelting enterprise in the Boundary Creek district. And it is argued that even if the railway company establish reduction works in the district itself and charged the same rates for the treatment of copper ore as are paid by the Rossland mine-owners at the Trail smelter, many of the larger properties on Boundary Creek if operated would be worked upon a very small margin of profit, because in a large majority of cases here copper constitutes the more valuable contents of the ores which differ in this particular from that of the Rossland camp, where gold values predominate and where consequently the fixed treatment charge of \$7 per ton is rarely exceeded. While not ourselves inclined to think that the C. P. R. will pursue a policy which would be suicidal to its own interests we still hold that under the peculiar circumstances of the case, competition alone provides the necessary guarantee that the Boundary Creek district will receive absolutely fair treatment at the hands of the railway company. Mr. Corbin has now, by the recent disposal of his interests in the Spokane Falls & Northern line, ample funds at his command to open a new line of railway into this section, and it has already been announced that application for charter rights will be again made to the Federal Parliament. It is therefore to be hoped that now the facts of the case are better understood the mistake of last session will not be repeated. Meanwhile some idea of the obstacles heretofore in the way of progress in the Boundary Creek district, may be gathered from the statement that a New York mining company owning a valuable property in this camp were recently called upon to pay out over three thousand dollars in haulage charges on seventy tons of machinery which was conveyed on waggons for a distance of between sixty and seventy miles from Marcus, the railway terminal to the property in question. Other cases have been brought to our attention were freight rates on such material as fire-brick, actually exceeded by nearly double the first cost of the article.

English correspondents who make flying visits to British Columbia in the interest of well-known papers, don't seem to take very much trouble in seeking readily available answers to points which they raise in their communications sent home. Thus Mr. Julius Price, who recently wired to the Illustrated London News an account of his visit to Klondike via B.C., expresses much surprise at finding that Rossland and other mine towns in the Province are, despite the risks of fire, wood-built, though the home supply of building stone is superabundant. It never seems to have occurred to Mr. Price to ascertain the reason for this fact. Had he enquired anyone, we think, could have told him that the cost of working stone and building with it is usually several times greater than that of building in wood, so that it is only when

a place in this Province attains a very substantial and permanent measure of growth with a considerable amount of capital available for the erection of more costly buildings, that a beginning is made of rebuilding one of our young cities, in whole or in part of brick and stone. The first decennium of the life of a B.C. "City" is therefore, with due regard to economic considerations, marked by building in wood rather than stone. Rossland's stone age will, however,—now that the city's permanent future is so well assured—begin no doubt very shortly, in fact it is well advanced already, as regards property in the business sections. But so long as pleasant and attractive homes, capable of habitation for from twenty-five to thirty or forty years at the cost of occasional repairs only, can be cheaply built of the celebrated fir and cedar of the Province, private residences of brick or stone will continue to be the exception rather than the rule in the towns of the Province. Quarrying in British Columbia will come in due course, but not yet, though our home supplies of marble, granite, freestone and other like building material are so rich as to be virtually inexhaustible. In the meantime, however, the increasing demand for good building stone in business centres should make profitable efficient work done at several of the best quarries.

At a London dinner given by Mr. Morris Catton, the notable, if not notorious Klondike company promoter, Sir James Grant, K.C.M.G., of Ottawa, made, as the chief guest of the evening an extraordinary "speech," full of most misleading statements and figures concerning the season's output of the Klondike gold fields. It would almost seem, as if for the nonce, Sir James had unwittingly caught a romancing contagion from his host, who will be remembered by our readers, as a gentleman, who, amongst many other remarkably false assertions concerning Klondike travelling and Yukon opportunities once compared boating on the Yukon rivers, rapids and lakes with canoe picnic excursions up and down the sunny Thames in summer in the fair district that adjoins the old university town of Oxford. Sir James, at any rate, delighted his host by nearly quadrupling the season's gold yield of the Yukon, estimating this at no less than \$40,000,000. He added that this big figure would be far surpassed in the next few years, and declared that Dawson would become the Johannesburg of North America. The last complimentary reference, though doubtless well intended, was, however, of very doubtful omen, as the latest accounts from Johannesburg describe the South African city as the temporary abode of thousands of half-starving Europeans and Americans, who would gladly get away if they could, the state of Johannesburg, notwithstanding the recent record gold yields of the Transvaal being one of intense depression. Speeches like that of Sir James Grant, who spoke of course from the standpoint of an Eastern Canadian, who has never been within several thousand miles of the Yukon, do far more harm than good. It was unfortunate, too, that so distinguished a Canadian was induced to lend, by implication at least, the weight of his authority in support of Mr. Morris Catton and his very dubious Klondike and Western Ontario company promotions. No doubt Sir James asserted what he believed to be correct, but it is a pity he did not inform himself more accurately concerning his subject before attempting to discuss it.