

OUTLOOK FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA'S MINES

Results That Have Been Already Obtained—Electric Railway Company Will Build Cars

(Staff Correspondence.)

Vancouver, July 8th.

The British manufacturers in their visit to the coast have seen for themselves the possibilities for commercial and industrial enterprises there.

Apart from the interest thus awakened in Great Britain, from where much money comes for development purposes in Canada, the attention of business men in other countries will be attracted. Capital has come to the West from France, Germany and Belgium, and when it is seen that Britain is alive, these other countries will be alert to opportunities. Present trade conditions are in favor of greater commercial relations with western Europe, with the round-the-world steamship lines that have been established in recent years, and in the expansion of commerce that is confidently looked for within the next few years many countries will participate. It was gratifying to note the strong feeling of imperialism in the speeches at the banquet here, indicating that in future trade Britain will have the preference. These manufacturers have come, after trips that have been made by several special representatives, press and otherwise, who reported on conditions, and now the principals themselves will be able to judge first hand just what is in Canada and what the possibilities of the future are.

Activity in Mining Circles.

In this letter a couple of weeks ago, mention was made of the prosperous condition of the lumber industry. Note may be made also of the activity in mining. News from the interior is encouraging, and the outlook is better for the operation of metalliferous properties. Prices of silver and lead are very favorable, one of the reasons being the trouble in Mexico, which has interfered with the supply from that country. Higher prices mean better conditions for the low grade properties in the interior of British Columbia, in the Slocan and Boundary, mine owners are very sanguine. Lead has gone up so that the bounty granted by the Dominion has been withdrawn for the time being, and operations are more extensive in the southeastern part of the province.

The Lucky Jim Company has been re-organized and this mine will be shipping as soon as the Canadian Pacific Railway branch line has been extended to the property. Mr. T. G. Proctor, of Nelson, has been successful in interesting capital in the Lucky Jim and the directors now include Premier Roblin, of Manitoba; Hon. G. R. Coldwell, minister of education; Hon. J. H. Armstrong, attorney-general; Hon. Hugh Armstrong, minister of finance, all of Winnipeg; Mr. Joseph Morris, Edmonton; Mr. S. Montgomery, St. Paul, and Col. G. Weaver Loper, Spokane. Mr. A. G. Larson, Vancouver, has been appointed consulting engineer for the company. This is the only one of the fine properties in the Slocan, another being the Standard, which is being developed by Spokane people, and is a money maker.

Two Mines and their Earnings.

The British Columbia Copper Company is again among the dividend payers, the latest dividend of three per cent. being an increase of one half per cent. over the dividend of June, 1911. This company is operating full capacity, production running over a million pounds per month, with estimated earnings of about \$60,000 per month. The British Columbia Copper Company has an option on the Voight property, comprising several claims near Princeton. Developments there have been highly satisfactory, in the vicinity of Princeton, are many properties and development on a large scale in that district will do much in attracting capital.

The Nickel Plate owners have bonded an adjoining group for \$150,000, and an American company, controlled by Mr. C. H. Brooks, has taken over the Kingston group. It has been the wonder of those who know the mineral resources of the Similkameen, why some of the properties with excellent showings have not been taken up by men with capital. The Nickel Plate is in the midst of a number of fine claims, and its earnings show what money is to be made. The Nickel Plate is now paying dividends of twenty-five per cent. per annum, and another quarterly dividend of five per cent. has just been declared. Their plan is to declare three quarterly dividends of five per cent. and a fourth of ten per cent. This company now has an output of about 6,000 tons a month of gold ore, which runs about \$12 to the ton.

Reports such as these indicate activity in mining that will result in considerable progress. Metalliferous mining will be the great backbone of prosperity in British Colum-

bia, and while it is coming to the front perhaps only gradually its advancement is substantial.

British Columbia Electric Railway.

Expansion has marked the operations of the British Columbia Electric Railway Company during the past few years, the latest move being the purchase of additional land in New Westminster at a cost of \$123,000 for car shop purposes. The company has found it very difficult to get delivery of cars from the manufacturers in the east, and it is proposed to manufacture cars here on a larger scale. With the big system it now has in hand, a very large number of new cars are constantly needed, for extensions are being steadily made and increasing traffic requires quicker schedules on the older established lines, necessitating more cars.

HOW GASOLINE VAPOR CAUSES FIRES

For my part, said Mr. A. Lindback, Manitoba fire commissioner, when investigating the St. Boniface fire at Winnipeg, if it were not the singular circumstances of fires being, firstly, so close together; and, secondly, all started at about the same time in the evening, I would say the seminary fire, at least, might have been started by the ignition of the vapor from gasoline. This vapor, you know, percolates down through the cracks in floors, like water, and, if ignited from beneath, will shoot up immediately, and envelop the building in flames. Now, there was a quantity of the gasoline being used by the tinsmith in the tower of the seminary, where the fire was first noticed, and as the day of the fire was a very hot day, the sun would certainly have the effect of causing the gasoline to evaporate and the vapor to spread, as I have explained.

The fact that these were unfinished buildings goes to prove the necessity of careful watching of buildings under construction. The city council has often been reminded in this way of the need for some by-law and the strict enforcement thereof, regarding contractors and the watching carefully of unfinished buildings.

COMPANY LAW

The decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the case of the Dominion Cotton Company and the Dominion Textile Company emphasizes certain phases of the law relating to joint stock companies and their control which in a day when such companies are owners of perhaps a majority of large business enterprises, it is well the investing and business public should understand. The facts of the case were simple enough. After a somewhat unfortunate experience, so far as the earning of profits was concerned, the directors of the Dominion Cotton Company accepted a proposition for handing over the control of their property to the Dominion Textile Company, which had been created for the purpose of uniting a number of conflicting interests and securing unity in administration. The shareholders were advised to accept the proposition and by a vote of 24,467 out of 30,336 shares did so. There were some later changes in the relations of the two concerns, but they did not affect the principle at issue. A minority of the shareholders resisted and the suit in which judgment was recently given was entered. It was held in the tribunal of final appeal that to prevail against their fellow shareholders a dissenting minority must show that the action to which objection is taken is ultra vires, or beyond the powers given to the company by the law, or that in using its powers the majority had deprived the minority of its rights. In the course of the opinion rendered a former decision was quoted to the effect that no mere informality or irregularity will entitle the minority to sue if the act complained of when done regularly would be within the powers of the company and the intention of the majority was clear. Of course any action that would carry the company beyond the powers of the law which created it, or any action that would do a wrong to the minority for the benefit of the others would involve the right to claim and get redress. Neither being proved in the case in question to the satisfaction of the members of the Judicial Committee, the arrangement which the majority had sanctioned stands. Other English courts have carried the principle thus outlined to the extent of holding that a majority of shareholders may instruct the directors what to do with the common property, even if the directors take another view. This state of affairs is a necessity of the jointstock system of financing business enterprises, and it is well that the many shareholders in such enterprises should understand alike what their rights and responsibilities are.—Montreal Gazette.

The Grand Trunk Railway has placed an order in New York for 3,000 box cars.