

chiefly in conjunction with lead, as contained in the "wet" galena ores of the Slocan,—instead of decreasing should show an increase of 25 per cent., is due to the development of the dry-ore belt of Slocan City Division and to a quite remarkable increase in silver values in proportion to tonnage from the Rossland ores. In fact, the returns from Rossland, it may be remarked, in passing, are somewhat astonishing, having regard to recent less favourable reports of the grade of ore now being mined in that district. In 1900, 217,636 tons of ore were treated by the smelters, and in 1901, 283,360 tons. For the two years the proportion of gold to the ton remains practically unchanged, but while in 1900 the returns show that the ore carried about three-quarters of an ounce of silver to the ton, the 1901 figures raise the proportion to over three ounces; and in the same manner the value of the copper contents have increased from \$1.50 to \$4.75 per ton. It would be interesting if these somewhat striking discrepancies were accounted for. The inconsiderable increase of only 1½ per cent. in coal production may be explained by the keen competition to which colliery owners on the Coast were subjected by the successful introduction of mineral oil as a substitute for fuel in California, which in the past has been the chief market for the British Columbia product. The increased production, however, from the East Kootenay collieries, for whose coal a large demand has been created both in Interior British Columbia and the neighbouring States, helped to maintain the 1901 output at a little over the average yield of recent years, while a 49 per cent. increase in coke output is noted as a result of larger activity at Fernie. For the first time in the Annual Reports issued by the Department, the iron ore output is specially referred to, instead of being considered and included under the head of miscellaneous mineral production, such as building stone, brick and "other metals," and the small beginnings of an iron industry is recovered in a footnote stating that iron ore to the value of \$17,288 was mined in 1901. Among other indications of last year's progress the report mentions that tonnage increased 66 per cent. the value of the metalliferous output was 36 per cent. greater, and forty-one mines were added to the list of productive properties.

PREACHER AND PROMOTER.

OF new mining districts in British Columbia which have lately come into prominence the Lardeau and the Similkameen rank highest in point of importance and popular esteem. It is but natural, therefore, that among the many new enterprises to be started in these promising localities some should be "wild-cats"; for the wild-catter being no fool makes a point of studying the inclinations and idiosyncrasies of his public; and so directly any one particular mining field begins to "boom" it is there that he sees an opportunity to suc-

cessfully operate. We have already referred to more than one wild-cat scheme promoted recently in the Similkameen. But without accusing the "Rev." Chas. W. McCrossan, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, of following the same practice in the Lardeau, we can nevertheless confidently assert that his methods, like those of the Heathen Chinee, are unquestionably and undeniably, peculiar. In the first place it is out of the ordinary, though we will not say inexcusably so, for a preacher to take to a business to which his special training should by rights not fit him at all; but the Rev. Mr. McCrossan very possibly has taught that true charity begins at home, and in accordance with that most excellent and convenient theory, he is making very admirable use of his opportunities. The reverend gentlemen is responsible for five promotions. These are the Golden Link Mining Co., the Golden Circle Mining Co., the Sicamous Gold & Copper Mining Co., the Metropolitan Gold & Silver Mining Co., and the Lardeau Smelting & Refining Co. The capital of these concerns is in each case, except one, a million dollars. The exception is capitalised at two millions. Not having heard of these wonderful properties before, and there being no mention of any of them, except the Metropolitan, in the Reports of the Minister of Mines, we applied to mining engineers resident in the district for information. Unfortunately these gentlemen prove to be as ignorant as ourselves, and all we can learn from what have hitherto proved well-informed local sources, is that the ore on the Metropolitan claim occurs in small stringers. Now, a two-inch vein,—and one of the Metropolitan stringers is, we understand, as wide as this,—must carry very high-grade ore to admit of profitable mining and although a few tons of ore were actually taken out last year, a correspondent informs us, and we can quite easily believe him, that the operation was conducted at a considerable loss. It was probably on account of this that the enterprising Mr. McCrossan purchased a small 30-ton "Vulcan" furnace, the efficiency of which has not, however, yet been demonstrated, and floated on the strength of it another million-dollar company. This, so far as it went, was a capital stroke of business, as it is not unlikely that the plant cost as much as ten thousand dollars. The shares in this undertaking were offered to the public at par. The "smelter," by-the-way, was to have been blown in in January last, but the interesting event was most regrettably postponed, as by an oversight *the search for fluxes was not begun until after the smelter had been set up*, and it was then ascertained seemingly somewhat late in the day, that there was no limestone within several miles of the works. Quite recently Mr. McCrossan acquired for the Metropolitan Company another property, the Triune, which really is of some determined value, and in capable hands would doubtless develop into an important mine, but—well, as we said before, the Rev. C. W. McCrossan's methods are peculiar.

Nearly all the shareholders in Mr. McCrossan's million dollar companies reside in the east, and they own