

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

As the year nears its close there seems to be good reason to think that there will be a considerable decrease in the value of the mineral production for 1917 as compared with that for 1916. One estimate published placed the probable total at about \$40,000,000, as compared with \$42,290,000 for 1916, but this was stated to be conditional upon an early resumption of operations at the smelting works and refineries at Trail and the production of ore at the mines that ship to Trail, which conditions, however, have not been fulfilled. Under the circumstances, then, it is unlikely the 1917 total value of mineral production will be nearly as large as that of the year immediately preceding. Without having gone into much detail to make a reliable estimate, the opinion may be given in a general way that while there may be an increase in total value of placer gold, and possibly of zinc, the decrease in value of other metals will be much larger than such suggested increase. Further, it is unlikely that the total output of coal has been any larger in 1917 than in 1916; in fact, the figures available at the beginning of December made it appear that there would probably be a small decrease in the year's gross production of coal as compared with 1916.

There had not been a settlement of labor troubles at Trail by the middle of December, so far as had been made known in Provincial newspapers, but Mr. W. H. Armstrong, of Vancouver, B. C., who earlier in the year had been given the duty of getting the coal mines of Alberta and Southeastern British Columbia into operation after a long suspension of work, has been at Trail endeavoring to bring about an agreement between the striking employees and the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company. Perhaps before these notes shall have been printed he will have succeeded, but at the time of writing neither party to the dispute appears to be showing any sign of yielding. Besides Mr. Armstrong, there are Mr. McNiven, Dominion fair wage officer, and some officials of the International Union of Mine and Smeltermen engaged in negotiations looking to an agreement.

The closing of the Trail smeltery to receipt of ores from Slocan and other mines has necessitated efforts being made to find another market for them. District newspapers have reported that there is a possibility of arrangements being made for shipment of ores to United States smelting works, and in this connection it is stated that arrangements have been entered into between the Canadian Pacific and American railways for a joint freight rate on silver-lead ores from British Columbia mines to smelteries in the United States.

West Kootenay.

Ainsworth.—The Kootenaiian, Kaslo, states that the suspension of operations at the concentrating works at Kaslo has still further increased the number of unemployed men there.

Announcement has been made that the Utica Mining Co. is to acquire the Bell and Sunset mines for a consideration of \$70,000 in cash and \$800,000 in shares in the Utica company. The Utica mine is situated near the head of Twelve-mile creek in the western part of Ainsworth mining division. The Bell is in Jackson basin, about eight miles south of Whitewater, near the boundary line between Ainsworth and Slocan divisions, while the Sunset is on the mountains forming the

divide between those divisions. Both Bell and Sunset mines have been producers in past years, the former largely of zinc ore and the latter of high-grade silver-lead ore. They are neighboring properties at the head of Jackson basin.

Slocan.—While there has been but little ore shipped from Slocan mines since the suspension of work at the Trail smelting works, other than zinc concentrate from the Standard Silver-Lead Mining Co.'s concentrator at Silverton under its contract with a zinc smeltery at Bartlesville, Oklahoma, U. S. A., few mines have yet completely stopped work as a result of the labor difficulties at Trail.

Near Sandon, the Slocan Star is hampered by lack of money to pay for necessary development work, comparatively heavy liabilities having been incurred to provide additional milling facilities, better water supply for the concentrating mill, aerial tramway, etc., without first having developed sufficient ore to keep things going in such a way as to meet payments when due. The shareholders in the company are now asked to pay an assessment on their shares to tide over the present financial difficulty; meanwhile operations have been stopped.

In connection with the Lucky Jim Zinc Mines, Ltd., it is stated that the former manager, Mr. G. Weaver Loper, has surrendered possession of \$150,000 in bonds he held as security for alleged advances to the company, but no definite action, so far as has been made public, has been taken in regard to the stated large over-issue of shares in the company. The closing of district concentrating plants at which Lucky Jim ore was made marketable and of the Trail smeltery to which shipments were being made, have for the time interfered with the progress the receiver was making toward clearing off liabilities to various creditors of the company.

A different condition of affairs is claimed for the Rambler-Cariboo Mines, Ltd., operating on the other side of the mountain from the Lucky Jim mine. A report published in Spokane, where is situated the head office of the company, follows: Promising conditions have been developed on the fifth and ninth levels of the Rambler-Cariboo mine, according to a report received from the mine, in Slocan district of British Columbia. It is believed important ore resources will be developed on those levels. The concentrating mill has been operated, working only one shift a day since the interruption, of ore shipments following the suspension of smelting at Trail. A fairly large quantity of crude and concentrated ore has been accumulated at the Rambler-Cariboo mill. It is probable, though, that it will be found desirable to stop production at the mine for a while. It is estimated that the company's surplus at the end of November was \$32,000.

Other Slocan notes are that work has been stopped at the Ivanhoe, a small property, near Sandon. Development of the Noble Five group is being continued. Mr. Bruce White, manager of the Noonday Mines, Ltd., reports the outlook for the Noonday mine as satisfactory except that shipment of ore is not at present practicable. The Surprise Mining Co., operating successfully the Surprise mine above Cody and the concentrator just below Sandon, has some forty men at work on the old Bosun property, between New Denver and Silverton, Slocan lake, which mine was a comparatively important producer some years ago until much zinc ore was encountered and a market for it could not then be found. The several properties including the Queen