

many who having wasted a month in vain attempts to get through the White Pass, gave it up, and, going over to Dyea, succeeded in crossing over the Chilcoot Pass and reaching the headwaters of navigation in less than two weeks. To state, as this chairman stated that because the Dominion Government, or the British Columbia Government, had granted his company powers to construct a railway or other road over the White Pass, it clearly showed that they recognized it as the "key to the situation," the "future highway," etc., is puerile. The granting of a charter proves nothing. The Dominion Government or the British Columbia Government would grant a charter to build a road to Hades if the proper parties asked for it, but this would not mean that either government to build a road to Hades if the proper parties asking for the charter as "the future highway" to those regions or the "key to the situation." The Dominion Government did indeed send a large force of Mounted Police to enter the Yukon country by the White Pass, but the attempt to enter by that pass ended in a miserable failure. On the other hand, the Mounted Police have successfully crossed over the Chilcoot Pass. The chairman further stated that the company had expended some £2,000 in making a trail through the White Pass. If so, there is certainly no evidence of it to those who go through the pass. The bridges over the Skagway River were built by volunteer work of the miners themselves, and wherever an attempt has been made to corduroy a bog or blast a path over the rock it has always been by the miners and at their own expense. From one end of the pass to the other one could hear nothing but curses for the officials and the papers that had deluded thousands into attempting to reach the Yukon by this route. The bleaching bones of over three thousand horses and the hundreds of worn and disappointed men returning to Victoria and Seattle by every steamer southbound from Skagway scarcely point to the White Pass as the "future highway to the Yukon basin."

In spite of all that can be done by the officials, charter mongers and real estate boomers of Skagway townsite to lure people to the White Pass, the truth as to that impassable pass is spreading far and wide among those intending to enter the Yukon, and we may confidently look forward to the tide of immigration flowing in *via* the Stickeen and Lake Teslin, the safest and shortest route to the Klondyke. The safest because the many dangerous rapids encountered by the White and Chilcoot Passes are avoided by this route. And the shortest, because, although in actual mileage a little longer, we are dealing with a country where distance is measured by time and not by miles. The mere fact of its being an all British route is in itself an immense advantage. No American official can interpose as at Dyea or Skagway to collect \$30 on every horse landed, to break open your supplies, to confiscate every drop of your good Canadian whiskey and otherwise make himself disagreeable. While at Skagway, in common with many others, I was asked by those abandoning the White Pass for the Chilcoot to write or otherwise warn others from coming to Skagway. This I have already done, but on reading the erroneous statements of Mr. Johnston I felt that one more letter on the subject in the RECORD, widely read and relied upon as it is in Great Britain, would not be out of place. T. R. E. McINNIS.

## NELSON.

THE condition of the Wonderful mine, as disclosed at the recent general meeting of shareholders held in Spokane, may be taken as typical of a great many other companies floated on the boom of last year. The treasury is empty, and (to put it mildly) the Company has not reached a paying basis. Its resources are at an end unless some philanthropic person steps in, because the chances of getting more money out of the public are slim. The share market is dead in spite of what certain journals may say and of a few spasmodic efforts to galvanize it into life. The local public have too many gaudy share certificates on their hands to wish for more. Even the people of Toronto and other eastern places seem to have satisfied their wants in this direction. These remarks do not, of course, apply to going concerns whose names have now become almost world wide. They proceed quietly on their way. They were there before the boom and they are still there, and there is not one of the boom companies that has joined their ranks. The Noble Five seems to be in much the same position as the Wonderful. The directors have issued notice of a special meeting to shareholders, inviting them to authorize the borrowing of no less a sum than \$150,000 on debenture bonds. The circular accompanying this notice states that the money is "required to liquidate the present indebtedness, and with the balance it is believed that sufficient development can be done to put the Company on a sound and dividend paying basis." These are honeyed words, which seem somehow or other to have a familiar ring about them. It would be interesting to know also to whom the dividend so confidently anticipated will be paid. To the shareholders? or to Messrs. ———? But this is anticipating.

The interesting document goes on to say: "It is the opinion of those who have made a personal thorough examination that the property owned by the Company contains large bodies of minerals, only needing the judicious expenditure of money to make it a success . . ." This was exactly the condition of the mine when the present company took it over. They were supplied with money, presumably as much as they thought necessary, for they proceeded with the work of development and erected a tramway and concentrator. If they had not enough money on hand to carry out these works they acted wrongly in commencing them. Who are these people who have made a "personal and thorough" examination of the mine? Is their opinion worth anything? Probably not much. Sir Charles Tupper goes all over the place saying that everything is beautiful and that he is pleased with it. Sir Charles no doubt is a very good man at his own particular line of business, but his opinion about mining affairs is not worth a cent. Why do not the directors of the Noble Five engage some expert whose name is a guarantee of skill and honesty, and let the shareholders know what he says about it, instead of producing the "opinions" of some person or persons unknown?

That there is more behind this circular than meets the eye is pretty clear and rumour points pretty plainly to the plot of the story. Some time ago Messrs. Rand, of New Westminster, bought a large block of stock for a certain firm well known in Victoria and it is understood that this same firm is prepared to advance the \$150,000 with a view to com-