

of the Rossland camp upon Mr. Heinze's retirement from the scene in order that the "great monopoly" may take his place. In short it is the best thing for Rossland that has happened for many a long day. The policy of the C.P.R., it appears, is to quote from a speech Mr. Shaughnessy, the company's vice-president, is reported to have made, to create traffic by assisting the miners to work the mines profitably. "The C.P.R." he said, "was not going into the smelting business to make money out of it. The company realized that in order to make the mining of lower grade ores abounding in the Trail district profitable it would be necessary to afford miners cheaper transportation and smelting rates, and smelting facilities would be, therefore, provided at cost. It is further understood that the company's charges for the carriage and treatment of ore from the Rossland mines will not exceed \$7.50 per ton—an exceedingly moderate rate, the reduction on former imposts being sufficiently marked to materially alter the conditions heretofore regulating enterprise in the camp. Whether this new tariff will immediately come into force or not until the Crow's Nest road is completed has at the present writing not been stated. It is, meanwhile, very probable that the company will either build a new road altogether over an easier grade into Rossland from Trail or increase the width of the old line from narrow to standard gauge and find a way of improving the gradients. The C.P.R. has been not unjustly stigmatized in the past as a "grasping monopoly"—"the great national highway (man)"—but so far as Kootenay is now concerned *nous avons change tout cela*. The company's rates' tariff is relatively moderate and its service there is in every sense of the word admirable. There can be no objection to even a monopoly if undue advantage is not taken of the powers it conveys.

It is some time since public interest in Canada has been wound up to the present high tension pitch because of a political question; but the situation itself is extraordinary. When the announcement was first made that the Federal Government proposed to grant Messrs. Mackenzie and Mann, a prominent Canadian firm of contractors, the enormous tract of 3,750,000 acres of mineral land in the Yukon as a subsidy for building a railway certainly less than two hundred miles in length from a point on the Stickeen River to Teslin Lake, those who remembered that the leaders of the Liberal party had ever protested against the policy and the principle of wholesale bonusing were unable to find language wherewith to express their astonishment at this very sudden change of front, although of course it was impossible not to be struck with the almost ludicrous example it afforded of the vast gulf between theory and practice. During the past month the question has been well discussed in Parliament and we may expect that within the next few weeks the issue will be finally decided. Meanwhile, no argument has been advanced by the supporters of the measure, so far as we can gather, that is sufficiently convincing to justify or excuse the Government's policy. In fact, the arguments put forward in favour of the scheme savour strongly of "special pleading." A land grant is a very different thing from a cash sub-

sidy, we are told for instance. This is admirably ridiculed by an eastern paper. A farmer returns home and informs his better half that he has secured a magnificent piano worth \$2,500 at a great bargain. "Why, John," she cries, "we can't afford to buy a piano!" "Perhaps not, old woman," the farmer answers, "but this blessed piano don't cost us a cent of money, I jest gave away the farm for it." Apart from the value of the land, which, of course, it would be difficult to estimate—it may be enormous but at any rate it must be considerable—the profits accruing from the operation of this road, over which the greater part of the travel and traffic to and from the northern gold fields will necessarily pass, will repay many times over, if Mr. Ogilvie's predictions concerning the future of the Yukon country are not very far astray, the original cost of construction and other expenditures long before the expiration of the five years during which period the monopoly is conferred on the contractors. These statements can very easily be verified by reference to Mr. Jennings' reports. That, however, there is pressing occasion for the construction of a railway through entirely Canadian or undisputed territory, affording communication to the navigable waters of the interior from the ocean, no one for a moment questions; the wisdom of creating a monopoly of this service may be furthermore admitted; but that the people of the country should derive all the benefits of such a monopoly and that the railroad should be operated and owned by the Government itself is the contention well and ably advanced by sensible men of both political parties. Meanwhile it is sincerely to be hoped that the bill in its present form will not pass the Commons; it is very questionable whether, unless in a very modified shape, it will be accepted by the Senate. The possibility of difficulties and complications arising with the United States with regard to the question of customs impositions at Wrangel, may have the happy effect of determining the Government to pursue a different line of conduct altogether and the action of the province's Premier in dispatching a telegram to Sir Wilfrid Laurier pointing out the necessity of a railway being built from a northerly seaport of British Columbia to Telegraph Creek was extremely well advised.

#### A CHAT WITH MR. HERBERT CARMICHAEL.

"O H, decidedly; British Columbia is gradually gaining a strong recognition in London, and the British public generally have a much better appreciation of the possibilities of our mines than they had a few years ago."

So spoke Mr. Carmichael, the Provincial Assayer, with whom I spent a very pleasant half hour the other day (writes a representative of the MINING RECORD) chatting for the most part on the subject of his recent sojourn in the great cities of England and Scotland, where this past winter he lectured on the resources and the general features of the province.

"While in London I examined the British Columbia section in the Imperial Institute," he continued. "Our mineral exhibit is not as up-to-date or as well classified as it will be in the future when the Department of Mines get their new mineral museum in order; duplicate samples from all our principal mines will then be sent to the Imperial Institute and ex-