

after allowing for certain deductions, to an average of well over 9 per cent. net. The increase that would be given to Yukon development and output by the lowering of the duty and consequent facilitation of the opening up and working of claims of medium grade and the lessening of present inducements to gold smuggling and other fraudulent evasions of duty would, it is thought with some reason, cause the considerable reduction of royalty urged to imply a much less diminution of aggregate Dominion Government receipts from the Yukon than the proposed rate of royalty reduction would at first sight seem to imply. There is undoubtedly a consensus of mining and commercial opinion to the effect that the present Yukon royalty is excessive and a bar to the speedy development of our northern gold country.

The success of the White Pass & Yukon Railway has enabled one English company, operating in British Columbia, to declare a splendid dividend for the latter half of 1899. The British Columbia Development Association, which helped to promote the railroad and obtained stock in that undertaking, disposed last year of its shares in the concern for no less than £21,569. As a result, the latest dividend of the British Columbia Development Association was one of 37½ per cent. to its shareholders and of 7,500 per cent. for the promoter holders of one hundred founders' shares of £1 each. These last each received £75. The Development Association has now returned to its shareholders 95 per cent of its capital of £20,000 and holdings in debentures, shares, a Skagway wharf, an hotel, and ranch at Cariboo and other assets a very large profit earning surplus over its capitalization. It is a pity for the sake of British Columbia that there are not a few more such successes amongst English organized companies. One cause of the prosperity of the British Columbia Development Association is the fact that its chairman, Mr. R. Byron Johnson, is a shrewd old-timer, now resident in London, who knows British Columbia well and is consequently able to take good care of his company's interests.

The exposures in connection with the Morris Catton companies, with which Messrs. Turner and Pooley so unfortunately allowed their names to be associated, and the collapse of the Tupper flotations emphasizes in a very striking measure the responsibility attaching to Ministers of the Crown or men of high official standing who lend their names and influence to speculative enterprises. Those who have endeavoured to prove that instead of deserving censure the ministers who have figured as directors of discredited or bankrupt mining and transport companies, are really entitled to commendation on the grounds that the means seemed to justify the end of assisting in the introduction of capital into the country, pay but a left-handed compliment to the abilities of the men they champion. Moreover, the well-meaning man is always objectionable. As a result of the recent exposures, however, it is reasonably safe to predict that for some time to come at any rate Canadian ministers will hesitate before taking similar chances of damaging their reputations by being found in company with such scoundrels as Mr. Morris Catton.

The current number of *La Revue Mineral Illustrée*, a monthly issue published by the French Agency of British Columbia, Ltd, naturally gives special prominence,

for the sake of French investor readers to elaborate descriptions of the operations of the Anglo-French Syndicate at Mansfield Camp, near Kaslo, where the syndicate owns and operates several gold-silver claims. Our contemporary speaks very highly—to use a mild expression—of the prospects of the Joker claim as a gold and silver producer and asserts that another of the Anglo-French Syndicate's properties—the Twin Lakes—ought to pay a dividend this year. But naturally the *Revue Mineral Illustrée* will not fail to make the most and best of the British Columbia properties which belong to the owners of the paper, which is an excellently printed and well got-up little monthly.

The veto by the Dominion Government of the anti-alien placer mines legislation of British Columbia last session, merely anticipates a repealing measure which would certainly otherwise have been brought in and passed at the next session of the Provincial Legislature. The immediate effect, however, of the veto will be to encourage the development of placer mining in the Atlin district at the hands of American investors and mine workers this year.

It is interesting to note how Canada's production of refined copper last year—most of which came from this province compared with that of certain other well known copper-producing countries of the world. The Dominion in 1899 produced 6,730 long tons of the metal, as compared with Montana's output of 106,650 tons and with the remarkable yield of the world famous Calumet & Hecla mines of Montana which last year shipped no less than 41,000 tons. The famous Rio Tinto mines of Spain, with the management of which Mr. W. A. Carlyle, late of Rossland, is now connected, also made a splendid copper yield last year, the output being 34,370 tons. Moreover Canada's total yield of last year was on the other hand that of British South Africa, where copper producing mines in Cape Colony and Namaqualand together produced 6,490 tons, or slightly less than the Canadian output. Meanwhile Newfoundland, which is steadily increasing its copper output, gave a yield of 2,700 tons in 1899.

#### THE LATE MR. J. L. THOMSON.

(Specially Contributed.)

IN the last number of the *Engineering and Mining Journal* we note with sorrow the death of Mr. John L. Thomson, the well-known copper and nickel metallurgist, who died on April 4th last at Norfolk, Va., of pneumonia.

By Mr. Thomson's death the world loses one of that group of men who have, during the past twenty years, revolutionized copper smelting and who may be said to have originated the smelting of nickel on a large scale. The advancement made in these directions is due more to Mr. Thomson's strong practical sense and experience than to anything else.

Mr. Thomson was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and was there associated with Mr. Thomas Gibb in the treatment of copper ores by the "Henderson" wet process. In 1785 he came to Canada as assistant to his brother, George Thomson, then in charge of the copper mines and smelting works at Copleton, some ten miles from Sherbrooke, Que. Later he moved with his brother to the Huntingdon copper mines at Dillonton, Que.