

have turned out to be correct. The steamers *Nakusp* and *Arrowhead* are running with full lists of passengers and freight, and we understand that business coming in from other directions is good.

The class of passengers coming in this year is also of a more desirable sort. As a rule they have something behind them; some capital to come and go on and are visiting the province with the purpose of taking a stake in it.

During previous seasons there were too many coming in bent on pure speculation, with little, if any means of their own, looking for something to turn up while others were in quest of "soft snaps," which in most cases never materialized.

The speculative boom has fallen flat as we all along predicted it would, and now mining men are getting down to straight business. Matters are getting on a firmer basis and general confidence is becoming stronger each day.

In the meantime the occupation of the company promoter has largely dwindled into thin air and his absence from the mining camps is certainly not regretted. We do not mean by this that we are entirely rid of these human sharks, but their day is past and their power as a body will never be felt again.

What is to become of hundreds of the mining companies registered on the books of the province which so far have nothing to show to justify their existence is more than we can say. We fear a day of reckoning is not far off. Our only hope is that the guilty will not be allowed to go free and the innocent suffer.

Texada Island is keeping well to the front and confidence in its great mineral riches is increasing each day. Indeed all along the coast there is more development work going on in a quiet way than people are aware of. For a short time confidence in Alberni seemed to slacken, but recently the news from that district is of a most encouraging kind.

We are sorry to say however that prospecting and development work does not go ahead as it should on Vancouver Island. In fact the Island is being kept back. We cannot shut our eyes to that fact, and yet it is the opinion of experienced men that Vancouver Island as a mineral producer will yet prove to be one of the best sections of British Columbia.

It seems to us that it is the duty of the Provincial Government to see that the prospector is as free to search for minerals on Vancouver Island as he is on

the mainland. Surely some plan can be devised to remove the restrictions at present existing. Vancouver Island cannot be kept back for all time to come.

Let us fill the hills north of Victoria with prospectors and what would it mean for Victoria? So great an increase in every department of trade that people would wonder that we had slept over the matter so long.

The establishment of the Metallurgical Works by Mr. W. J. R. Cowell, in Victoria, will prove a boon to those engaged in the development of mining properties on the islands and along the coast, and benefit the mining industry in this neighbourhood to an extent that can hardly be estimated at the present time. Mr. Cowell, who has invested a large amount of money in the works, should receive the highest encouragement and support from mining men. We will have more to say about these works in a later issue.

Mr. Carlyle, the Provincial Mineralogist, is continuing the good work he commenced last season in visiting and reporting on the various mining districts of the province.

We observe too that he seems to be working on somewhat different lines from last year. During his trip in the summer of 1896, it was almost impossible for local men to obtain from him any information as to his work and his impressions of the country.

Now we see that he is giving some long and interesting speeches which, when published widely, will be apt to draw immediate attention to the resources of the province and do much to inspire confidence in British Columbia.

There is of course much information collected by Mr. Carlyle during his journeyings which it would not do to make public, except through the channel of his report, but on the other hand there is much of a general character which it can do no harm to make known, but will be likely to do much good and stir up an increasing interest among Eastern capitalists in our wonderful resources.

What we would suggest to Mr. Carlyle is to take the local paper in each camp he visits more into his confidence, and give to each such information as he deems may be useful in pushing forward the mining industry. These interviews, which he could always make sure of having correctly reported, would go far and wide and be of great benefit to the province. They would in no way interfere with the value of his report, but would increase greatly the value of his trip as a whole.