

centre of British Columbia goldfields is more accessible to London than such places as San Francisco, Capetown, (not to mention Johannesburg), Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. The real test of distance, however, is the comparative facility of communication. Does one wish to do business by telegraph with London from the centre of British Columbia gold-fields? It is more accessible than Glasgow. When one's office closes at night the telegraph message is handed in. The reply is received before the office is opened in the morning and the correspondent in London has had a full working day to consider its contents or procure information asked for. It is possible to sit in one's office in the centre of the British Columbia gold-fields and converse with people in Spokane, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Butte and Helena. As a matter of fact it is not done because there is not business enough with these places to maintain a service. But it is possible. Theoretically it is possible to do the same thing between Lombard and Queen Victoria streets. Practically it is not. The meaning of an adequate telephone circuit has not yet dawned upon the transpentine intelligence. The conditions of life are not materially different in the centre of the British Columbia gold-fields than they are anywhere else. There is possibly more room for the activities of young men of energy and principle. Of course people may send degenerates there and maintain them after they are there just as they may anywhere else. It is fairly cheap, too. Because these unfortunates fall at once and outwardly, where they really belong, to the lowest strata of society. Some find their metier in handling a pick and shovel. Others, the worst, prey upon society by incurring debts they cannot and do not intend to pay. A few become a direct burden on the community by finding their way into the prisons and lunatic asylums. The idea of this duke and his adviser expressed in the course of the same dialogue that in shipping such material to the colonies they are helping to build up the Empire with a big capital E may be a pious but certainly is a ghastly fiction.

The absorption of the Dominion Copper Company, owning the Brooklyn and Stenwinder mines at Phoenix, by a New York syndicate with James Breen at its head, is the most convincing demonstration yet offered to outsiders that the low grade of Boundary ores will pay. It is frequently said, and it is true, that the problem in the Boundary is a smelting and not a mining problem. James Breen is the one man in the Northwest, if not in all America, to give a fully trustworthy opinion whether that problem has been or can be solved. He has given that opinion in the most convincing and emphatic way possible by purchasing the Brooklyn and Stenwinder. He was F. A. Heinze's right hand man in the construction and operation of his Butte smelters, by which the Montana smelting ring was smashed, and treatment of ore very much reduced. He constructed the smelter at Trail to treat the Le Roi ore and learned what could be done with that kind of ore at a freight and treatment rate of \$11.00 a ton. He left Heinze to build the Northport smelter for the Le Roi company, who were glad to bonus his knowledge and that of his partner in the enterprise, Mr. Bellinger, with an interest of one-quarter in the plant on a contract with the mine for an \$8 treatment rate. When the B. A. C. purchased the Le Roi mine they

purchased three-fourths only of the smelter, and were bound to account to Messrs. Breen & Bellinger at an \$8 rate. In two years these gentlemen had realised large private fortunes, which were augmented by the price at which the Le Roi company were glad to purchase their interest. Since that time Mr. Breen has been unattached, having made up his mind to operate for himself. That he has found the best available opportunity offered by the copper industry of a continent in the purchase of low grade mines in the Boundary district of British Columbia is fairly conclusive evidence as to the value of such mines and the future in store for the district.

The Crow's Nest Coal Company is now the largest producing coal mine in the Province, having a daily output of 1,200 tons. Besides which it keeps 281 beehive coke ovens engaged in the subsidiary manufacture of coke. It requires one hundred freight cars daily to handle the output. From one-third to one-half of the output is exported, the Great Northern Railway buying 400 tons a day for use on its railway system. It is curious to reflect that when first opened the coal of the Crow's Nest field was not considered a good coal for use on locomotives on account of its liability to make the fire box of the engine into a miniature coke oven. This, however, was easily overcome as soon as the firemen became accustomed to its use, and now it ranks as steam fuel second to none. The greater part of the coal produced, however, is absorbed by the mining and smelting industries of British Columbia itself, which is the most satisfactory feature of the success attendant on this great enterprise. That active mining for the precious metals was never in such a buoyant and progressive condition as at present is amply proved if proof were necessary by the continuous and increasing demand for coal and coke. The coal mining industry in the Crow's Nest Pass cannot flourish unless mining for the precious metals is flourishing. The prosperity of the one is derived from the prosperity of the other.

The Centre Star reappears as a dividend paying mine after the best of a year devoted to organization and development. The dividend which is payable on the 1st of January is at the rate of one per cent., the total sum distributed being \$35,000. It is expected that from that date on a regular monthly dividend of one per cent. will be paid. Centre Star shares stand at 50 per cent. premium, and at that price, provided the anticipations of the management are fulfilled, will yield 8 per cent. per annum. The present price of Centre Star shares is the price at which they were first issued. The mine carries a capital valuation of \$5,250,000. Eight per cent. per annum does not allow much for resumption of capital and interest on a mining investment. Even regular monthly dividends at this rate would not justify any advance in the shares, except in anticipation of increased output and profits.

The shares of the Nimrod Syndicate are being heavily boomed on the English market on the strength of a consolidation of interests purchased on McKee Creek, in Atlin district. The capital of the Nimrod Syndicate is £25,250 in £1 shares and the shares stand on the market at £6½. The Nimrod Syndicate has bought out McKee, the locator of the creek,