

explanation. The marriage rate is decreasing absolutely, and the average age at which it is contracted is rising. These are highly important factors in the birth-rate problem; they are factors which are regarded with gratification by eminent physicians who do not regard it as the highest evidence of national wisdom, physical well-being and progress to have a high birth-rate. There are nations and communities whose condition in all desirable respects would now be much more favourable had the population developed less prolifically. A high birth-rate often leads to a high death-rate.

The following statistics are quoted in reference to this question:—

Births per 1,000 of population.	1901.	1900.	1899.	1898.	1897.
London.....	29.0	29.2	29.6	29.7	30.2
England and Wales...	28.5	28.7	29.3	29.4	29.7
Marriages.					
London.....	17.6	18.0	18.4	18.7	18.5
England and Wales...	15.9	16.0	16.5	16.3	16.0

Such figures afford very slight materials for such sweeping conclusions as have been drawn from them. Certainly, they do not justify such hysterical laments over the wickedness of the age as have been uttered in high places. In years gone by eminent writers and public men condemned severely the recklessness with which large families were brought into the world. Their protests, doubtless, have had some effect, and it is reasonable to assume that the higher birth-rate of past years arose from the recklessness which was so much deplored. If then, as seems likely, the diminished birth-rate has been caused, to some extent, by diminished recklessness, it is a sign, to such extent, of an advance in civilization. This, however, cannot be said of such other causes of a low birth-rate, as, luxurious living, chronic excitement, and other social evils of the day, for they indicate a lower stage of intelligence and a higher degree of relaxed morality.

MINERAL PRODUCTION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The annual report of the Minister of Mines, British Columbia, for 1903, which is just to-hand, contains a number of diagrams, tables, illustrations, maps, and information regarding mining affairs, of the greatest interest. The value of the mineral products of British Columbia for the last three years was as follows:—

Minerals.	1903.	1902.	1901.
	\$	\$	\$
Gold, placer.....	1,060,420	1,073,140	970,100
“ lode.....	4,812,616	4,888,269	4,348,603
Total gold.....	5,873,036	5,961,409	5,318,703
Silver.....	1,521,472	1,941,328	2,884,745
Copper.....	4,547,535	3,446,673	4,446,963
Lead.....	689,744	824,832	2,002,733
Coal.....	3,504,582	4,192,182	4,380,993
Coke.....	827,715	640,075	635,405
Others.....	531,870	480,051	417,238
Totals.....	\$17,495,954	\$17,486,550	\$20,086,780

Totals.	1900.	1899.	1898.	1897.
	\$16,344,751	\$12,393,131	\$10,908,861	\$10,455,268
“	1896.	1895.	1894.	1893.
	\$7,507,956	\$5,643,042	\$4,225,717	\$3,588,413
Total mineral production 1852 to 1892.....				81,090,069
“ “ 1892 to 1903.....				126,134,423
Grand total 1852 to 1903.....				\$207,224,492

Since 1858 the total value of placer & lode gold mined in British Columbia has been \$92,550,451; of silver, \$19,997,354; lead, \$11,137,265; copper, \$16,803,754; coal and coke, \$63,321,869; other materials, \$3,413,799. For 1903 the mineral production of Canada was: British Columbia, \$17,495,954; Yukon Territory, \$12,250,000; all other Provinces, \$22,059,520, making the aggregate mineral production of the Dominion last year, \$51,805,474.

The Report says:—“The one thing which promises more than any other to promote the well-being of the mining industry has been the general recognition of the fact that the margin of profit, as a rule, lies in the large masses of low grade material. Included in this term, “low grade material,” might be taken certain by-products which heretofore have not been a source of revenue.” This, we may say, is nothing new in mining work, the system of taking the cream of the production and regarding the rest as of too little value to be looked after, has ruined many a mining and other industrial undertaking. In the “fragments that remain,” are the profits of many an enterprise.

JUNE DIVIDENDS AND MEETINGS.

The following bank dividends for the half year were payable on 1st inst., and meetings announced during June at date below:—

	Rate of Dividend.	Date of Meeting.
Canadian Bank of Commerce.....	3½ p. c.	
Bank of Montreal.....	5 “	
Bank of Toronto.....	5 “	
Bank of Ottawa.....	4½ “	
Quebec Bank.....	3½ “	6th June
Imperial Bank.....	5 “	15th “
Standard Bank.....	5 “	15th “
Hochelaga Bank.....	3½ “	15th “
Merchants Bank of Canada.....	5 “	20th “
Bank of Hamilton.....	3½ “	20th “
Union Bank.....	3 “	21st “
Ontario Bank.....	3½ “	21st “
Traders' Bank.....	3 “	
La Banque St. Jean.....		14th “
The Sovereign Bank.....		

The aggregate amount of above dividends is \$2,154,363, and the total capital represented, \$51,143,928. The average of dividends is over 4.21 per cent. for the past half year, or 8.42 per cent. per annum.