

ture coke even at the price now demanded, which may be equally true. But if the Crow's Nest Coal Company had not a monopoly, would the price of coke have been advanced in so arbitrary a fashion? So long as the Crow's Nest Coal Company continue to enjoy a monopoly there can be no certainty of continuous prosperity in the metalliferous mining districts of the Kootenay and Yale. That already has been clearly demonstrated.

There is a good deal of unconscious humour in the following statement of the chairman of a Rand mining company, speaking at a shareholders' meeting on the subject of the native labour problem: "He (the chairman) denied the allegations made in the London Press of the mine owners being slave drivers, and he affirmed that the food and pay given to the natives rendered their condition infinitely better than that of the London poor. He pointed out that the Native Labour Association would prove one of the greatest civilizing agencies in the history of South Africa by opening up new districts and giving the natives a knowledge of work and a taste of luxuries, and thus preparing the way for the trader and the missionary."

If the point of the argument is to be found in the last paragraph, it is surely an unsatisfactory one, for while the savages of Africa may require a "knowledge of work" there is certainly no necessity to teach them that a missionary is a luxury. He is not even an acquired "taste."

The catastrophe, which occurred at the close of last month at Frank, Alberta, a small coal mining town on the line of the C. P. R. at the south-eastern borders of British Columbia, was of an unlooked for and appalling character. Without warning huge masses of rock became detached from near the summit of the mountain and sweeping down the hillsides swept with irresistible force into the valley beneath, carving death and destruction to the village. The loss of life was chiefly among the women and children living in cottages, which were buried under the avalanche of rock, the men who it was first thought had been buried for ever in the mine by the sealing-up of the entrances to the tunnels, managed to dig their way out, without assistance from a rescue party. This was the one gleam of light in this most sad and deplorable affair. The destruction of property and machinery was also very considerable, and the blow is a very serious one to the coal company operating the Frank mines.

British Columbia is not the only country in which the question of mine-taxation is a burning one. Thus we

learn that steps are being taken in Idaho to test the validity of the law enacted by the last Legislature of that State, providing that mines shall be required to pay taxes only on their net output. We imagine, however, that it is not the mine owners who in this case are raising objection. *Apropos* of the subject of mine-taxation, our contemporary, the *Mining Reporter* (Denver) remarks that "Outside of a nominal acreage assessment which surface real estate would bear, it is difficult to equitably assess that which constitutes actual mine valuation, because its commercial value is not easily established. Shafts, tunnels and levels, run for the purpose of exploration, should not be considered assessable, for of themselves they are non-productive. The ore that is capable of being valued and measured in a mine is the real property; and the conditions and locality always should enter in when it comes to making an assessment based on present commercial value. In strictly mining communities, where mining is the chief industry, the *pro rata* taxation, as between mine and mine, is usually quite satisfactory, because mining conditions there are more clearly defined. The necessity of raising a certain amount by taxation is recognized and a tolerably equitable basis is generally established. But in countries having a great diversity of industries there naturally arises some friction as to the proportion of public burden each industry shall bear. All of which is much to the point.

Both the Rossland newspapers publish articles recently commenting favourably on the progress of mining in that district during the past few years and speaking in most hopeful terms of the outlook for the immediate future. The *World* points out that the Le Roi in something less than four years has, after paying the expenses of development and working, earned nearly half the amount of its capital—although, of course, this has not gone into the pockets of shareholders in the form of dividends. The reasons for which are well known. The showing, too, of the other big mines is also far from unsatisfactory. Meanwhile the *Miner* states that this year a great deal more activity is being shown in the development of the "partially developed mines." The Giant, for example, has again resumed operations and is more than paying its way; a large concentrator is to be set up on the White Bear, which is rapidly becoming an important mine; the Jumbo is to be again operated in a few weeks' time, as also the Novelty; a considerable sum of money is to be expended on the further development of the Spitzee; on the Iron Mask, the I. X. L. and O. K. work has been resumed, and it is said the California will also shortly be worked; in the Centre Star richer ore is re-