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EDITORIAL NOTES.

DURING the past twelve months the most remarkable progress in the history of mining in British Columbia has taken place. These developments, albeit more convincingly evidenced in the districts of West Kootenay, are by no means confined to one locality, and sections of the province whereof a twelvemonth ago little was heard have been meanwhile explored and opened up with results that can be only regarded as eminently encouraging.

But figures in some cases convey a more powerful and permanent impression than words, and when it is stated that the value of the British Columbia lode mines' production for 1897 is nearly equivalent to that of the seven years preceding or from the inception, practically speaking, of this class of mining as a provincial industry, some conception will be formed of the highly satisfactory nature of the past year's record.

The majority of last year's producing and dividend paying mines are situated in the Slocan districts, but the list of properties that are proving valuable under development in the Rossland and Trail Creek camps is notably becoming larger—the value of the output from these last named camps during 1897 of about \$3,500,000, testifying to a very noteworthy increase over the figures of former years.

Consequently upon this mining activity in West Kootenay the growth and prosperity of the principal commercial centres of West Kootenay—Nelson and

Rossland having become incorporated as cities during the year—has been very marked, the population has largely increased, and many new industrial enterprises have been established.

South Yale and the Harrison Lake districts, the Lillooet, Big Bend, Kamloops, East Kootenay and also from the Coast camps reports for the year are without exception favourable, while the recent rich discoveries of placer gold in Omineca and of quartz in Cassiar are noteworthy. The returns from hydraulic operations in Cariboo will not possibly be greater than those of '96, but this may be accounted for without difficulty, on the ground that much of the work being carried on by companies in this district is of a preliminary character and actual results may not be expected therefrom for some time to come. But according to the estimates of a disinterested and prominent mining engineer we are assured that from one mine alone in this historic camp, upon the installation of adequate machinery, gold will be saved at the rate of two million dollars annually for many years to come.

It is said that never have the prospects seemed brighter in the interests of mining in British Columbia, nor has any year opened under more favourable auspices. English investors have learnt to feel confidence in the country and while it is necessary to advise the incautious to beware of the unscrupulous devices of promoters and of the injudicious risking of capital in semi-fraudulent undertakings, a great many of the companies recently floated in London to acquire mining property in the province are reasonably trustworthy. The Yukon excitement, although very likely to end disastrously to the many who have foolishly been carried away with the idea of the facilities offered of rapid fortune-making in that inhospitable region, will at least to a certain degree exercise a beneficial influence in drawing greater attention to our own valuable mineral fields. Furthermore, the assurance of the completion ere the close of the year of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway, whereby the cost of smelting and transportation of ore in Kootenay will be materially reduced; the development of the illimitable coal measures existing at the Pass; the probability of railroad communication facilities being supplied to and opening up thereby the great copper-gold district of Boundary Creek, are among the factors that will contribute to the increased prosperity of the New Year.

At a meeting in London this month of the shareholders of the British Columbia and New Finds Gold