SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE

BRITISH COLUMBIA

While in some parts of the Province the lateness of the Spring is proving unfavorable to mineral production, chiefly owing to lack of power where water is largely depended on for driving machinery, the heavy snowfalls that have been experienced during the latter part of the winter promise an abundant water supply for washing gold-bearing gravels and for placer-mining uses generally.

Several metalliferous mining companies engaged in mining and ore reduction in the Province have declared dividends for the first quarter of the current year. These are the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Co.; the Granby Consolidated Mining, Smelting and Power Co.; the Hedley Gold Mining Co., and the Le Roi No. 2, Ltd. The respective totals of these dividend disbursements are as under:

Consolidated M. and S. Co.	$260,445
Granby Consolidated Co.	374,563
Hedley Gold Mining Co.	60,000
Le Roi No. 2, Ltd.	29,220

The Standard Silver-Lead Co.'s dividend for the quarter has not yet been ascertained.

The uncertainty as to the coke supply, now that the agreement with the Crowsnest district coal mine employees has terminated by effluxion of time, is causing much uneasiness. Unless sufficient coke shall be obtainable for the blast furnaces of the several smelting works in Kootenay and Boundary districts, it will not be practicable to continue ore production. While some men will continue to be employed in doing development work in mines where this can be done to advantage at this time, it is to be expected that the larger number of the miners will be discharged. A report from Rossland indicates that this has already resulted, the news printed being in effect that eighty men have already been laid off at the War Eagle and Centre Star mines in that camp. In any case, there is little inducement, under existing cost conditions, to continue mining ore from those mines, since its chief value is in gold, so it may well be left in the mines and effort be concentrated in extracting ore having a greater copper content, such as occurs in parts of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Co.'s neighboring Le Roi mine, and to some extent in the Le Roi No. 2 company's Josie group, nearby.

East Kootenay.

Thirty men are employed in the St. Eugene lead-silver mine, near Moyie, owned by the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Co. The ruins of the concentrating mill, destroyed recently by fire, are being cleared up. Meanwhile fifteen to twenty families, nearly all recent arrivals, following the company's decision to again operate the concentrator, are anxiously waiting to learn whether or not the company will rebuild the mill at Moyie. Already, it is stated, forty men have removed to other places, there not being any work for them to do after the destruction of the mill.

From the Cranbrook Herald it is learned that reliable mining report says that the Dibble group of mines near Mouse creek in Fort Steele mining division has been leased to a strong syndicate in which Sir George Foster has a large share. Active mining operations will be commenced as soon as supplies shall have been got up to the property. The further statement is made that the Victor Silver Leaf Mining Co., working the Victor claims on Mouse creek, has found them well worth developing, the ore encountered being "splendid." From good authority it comes that the company contemplates soon building a concentrator.

News from Calgary, Alberta, where representatives of the Western Coal Operators' Association and of District 18, United Mine Workers of America, have been negotiating for some time relative to the terms on which a new agreement between the parties shall be made, is not encouraging as March draws to a close. Press despatches state that the representatives of the miners demand what amounts to a 25 per cent. increase in wages and a 20 per cent. reduction in hours of labor. Another reported demand is that the miners shall be granted 38 holidays in the year instead of eight provided for under the old agreement. It is asked that every pay day be made a holiday and that the men be granted a week off during the hot weather in July. Notwithstanding that no agreement appears to be in sight at the time of writing, there is said to be a disposition on both sides to compromise

West Kootenay.

Ainsworth.—For two weeks in March ore receipts at Trail from mines in Ainsworth mining division were light, having been only 83 and 82 tons, respectively. The Bell mine, in Jackson basin, has been sending zinc ore to Trail, but other shipments are generally silver-lead ore, the shippers prior to the end of the first week in March having included the Bluebell, Highland, and Utica. No word has yet come concerning the Florence Mining Co.'s new concentrating mill, but it is likely shortness of water prevents sufficient electric power being generated for working the mill machinery, and probably there is also an inadequate quantity for milling purposes generally.

Slocan.—Water for operating concentrating mills is still short in the Slocan district. The Silverton correspondent of the Kaslo Kootenaian states that lack of water continues to prevent a resumption of milling at the Galena Farm mine, and the Sandon correspondent states that those who are operating mills are waiting patiently for the Spring freshet to allow of more power being developed for the mills. There are three concentrating plants in the immediate neighborhood of Sandon, namely, those of the Ruth, Slocan Star and Surprise mines. In the vicinity of Slocan lake there are the mill at Roseberry, the Galena Farm and Standard mills, near Silverton, and the Hewitt mill, up Four Mile creek. Three others affected by the short supply of water are the Rambler-Cariboo mill, above Three Forks; the concentrator at Kaslo, and the Florence Mining Co.'s mill, near Ainsworth. Across the lake from Ainsworth, the New Canadian Metal Co.'s mill at Riondel, when conditions are favorable, concentrates lead ore from the Bluebell mine.

A small lot of ore, 37 tons, was recently received at Trail from the owners of the Surprise silver-lead-zinc mine, situated near the summit of the mountain above Cody, Slocan. This was the first ore received at the Consolidated Co.'s smelting works from that mine for about two and a half years. Ore production from the Surprise was curtailed when the Ivanhoe concentrating mill was destroyed by fire in the summer of 1915, at which time both silver-lead and zinc concentrates made from Surprise ore at that mill were shipped to the United States. For a while, in the latter part of 1915, the ore mined was concentrated at the Rambler-Cariboo Co.'s mill, distant from the mine six or seven miles,