

fore the people of British Columbia in regard to railway construction north of the Canadian Pacific is that of the Canadian Northern Railway Company, although the officials of the Grand Trunk system have made public the intentions of that company to construct a transcontinental line to a point in this Province. There is abundant room for both systems, not only in the prairie region but West of the Rocky Mountains: From the most northerly point on the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway to the Northern boundary of the Province the distance is 640 miles, and for more than a hundred miles further north a country worthy of development is to be found. That is to say, there is in all a region approximately 800 miles wide lying north of the C. P. R. that will probably be found to repay any well considered plan for its exploitation. But meanwhile, as we have said, only the Canadian Northern, so far as is known has officially placed its plans before the Government of the Province. What those plans are can only be surmised at present and until they are definitely stated, any discussion of them would be premature. It is not too soon, however, to express the hope that a favourable consideration will be given to any reasonable proposal that may be made; that is, that the company's request for assistance will be regarded as being on behalf of an enterprise, which will be of incalculable value to the Province.

THE OLALLA SWINDLE.

TO publicly express the opinion that an undertaking is a swindle is libellous. If the Olalla Copper Mining and Smelting Company is not a swindle, it is a very fair imitation of one; and if the promoters of the undertaking are not knaves they are very dangerous lunatics with any amount of method in their madness. In any case they should be put under restraint. We had hoped that the exposure of the company's methods in the *Engineering and Mining Journal*, of New York, would have been sufficient to check the ardour of Mr. William J. Brewer and his confederates, but that individual evidently was not at one time a Salvationist to no purpose. Also the *Engineering and Mining Journal*, one should have remembered, is not read by the class reached by the *New York World*, nor is the *MINING RECORD* for that matter; and herein lies one's powerlessness. If the Eastern daily and financial newspapers sought or were on the lookout for expressions of opinion from local authorities as to the *bona fides* of such concerns as the Olalla swindle, it would be dif-

ferent, but with the representative "yellow journal" press sensationalism or a possibility of an advertisement are much more powerful considerations, and a sensational fiction is generally to be preferred to a sensational fact. Still it is something to have entered a protest in the hope that it will be productive of some good. The method by which the promoters of the Olalla Company are endeavouring to obtain money under false pretences is ingenious in the extreme. Their use of both the *suppressio veri* and of the *suggestio falsi* is really admirably skilful and it is reasonably certain that a hook so cleverly baited will catch many fish of the variety well, though not very elegantly, termed "suckers." As we have already in a previous issue given an illustration of the method adopted by the Olalla Company of advertising in the New York daily press, it is hardly worth while to refer especially to the full page announcements which have been appearing the past few weeks in the ponderous Sunday editions of the *World*, except to say that if possible the language is even more grotesquely exaggerated, the statements even more glaringly misleading. The concern has acquired some 63 very partially developed prospects, some not developed at all. It may be confidently asserted that no qualified engineer has estimated or would estimate that in all these claims there is even a few thousand tons of ore in sight, yet the promoters of the concern have the bare-faced effrontery to suggest, and suggest in such a manner that it becomes a statement, that the profits on one year's operations will be \$900,000, that the earnings of a fictitious smelter will be \$900,000, and that the profits of a problematical railway will be \$1,500,000. The "mines" are incidentally compared with, as having "a greater copper value than the ores of the famous dividend paying mines, the Calumet and Hecla, the Anaconda, the United Verde, whose stocks are selling at many times their par value," and Mr. Brewer, a most villainous looking person judging from his published portrait, is, by an alleged interviewer in the same newspaper, described as being in temperament much like Mr. Roosevelt, and like Moses, Christ and Lincoln in that he developed his "tremendous powers in the solitude and peace of the country." It is astonishing that a metropolitan newspaper, however debased, should publish such inconceivable twaddle; it is still more astonishing that sane men should be impressed by it. The State Mineralogist of California has, of late, done much to discourage and expose "wild-cat" operations in that territory. Our own Department of Mines might well, in such extreme cases as this, adopt somewhat similar measures.