

There are encouraging signs of a revival of mining activity about Ainsworth, which has too long remained quiescent. The Highland group of mines has just been acquired by a body of very substantial British capitalists, who evidently intend to spend large sums in developing the property. One of the directors of the concern, Mr. Hammersly Heenan, of Manchester, England, a well known mechanical engineer, has the reputation of proving thoroughly any mineral enterprise in which he interests himself and believes to possess merit. He is one of a number of men, who for some ten years operated gold mines held by the Darien Company on the Central American isthmus of that name. Year after year passed disappointing high expectations of results, but recently after well nigh a decade of hope deferred, the mine has begun to yield well and justified its owners' expectations. If the other directors of the Highland be of similar type to Mr. Heenan the property will at any rate be well exploited.

It is understood that negotiations are in progress which will, it is hoped, result ere long in a resumption of work at the Savonas Cinnabar mines. The present increasing demand for quicksilver, which has risen much in price, is bringing Cinnabar deposits into much greater request than they have been in the recent past.

If it is true, as reported, that Mr. Maynard H. Cowan and other Montana mining capitalists with extensive smelter connections have acquired and will shortly work a large area of coal land in the Crow's Nest country near Livingston, we may expect next year a great extension of the already steadily proceeding development of one of the greatest coal fields in the world. Mr. Cowan asserts that owing to the more advantageously situated locality of the syndicate's property, he will be able to mine and produce coal more cheaply than the Crow's Nest Pass Company. We do not, however, believe that Crow's Nest shareholders have any cause to fear for their future dividends.

It is suggested by a mining engineer of Vancouver that a tax be imposed on the values of mineral claims held idle for speculative purposes. The principle of

such taxation is unassailable, but there is only one way to apply it in practice, and that is by taxing all Crown granted claims, but allowing a rebate on the levy to owners who could swear to having performed a certain amount of work in the course of the year. This idea is not original, though published for the first time, but in common with many others equally as practical, was evolved from the inner consciousness of Mr. John Houston, the member for Nelson.

The Provincial Government is to be commended for its resolve to issue frequent bulletins and statistics of mine production and output, and if, as the Minister of Mines, Mr. McBride, hopes, these returns can be

made either monthly or at intervals not very much greater, they will certainly advertise in the most effective possible way the mineral resources of the country.

The fact that the provisional boundary arrangement in Alaska for the time being concedes to this province about half the Porcupine mine district, is terribly perturbing to our American cousins. Indeed Mr. Bryan has already used the point in one of his anti-expansion speeches and asserted that since the present Republican administration has hauled down "Old Glory" in Alaska, it should not be impossible to hand over the Philippines to native rule. The Porcupine district now provisionally placed within the borders of the province, is in area small, and its plac-



Mr. R. McBride, the New Minister of Mines.

ers only at present produce about \$125,000 in gold annually. But according to experts, there are also in the district promising copper prospects. Mr. Justice Martin will find it no easy task to settle the various points in dispute as to Porcupine mine titles, but he will probably—as did his colleague, Mr. Justice Irving, in Atlin—manage to solve the problem by taking the equitable rather than the technical view of the merits of the various cases submitted to his decision.

At the London Bankruptcy Court a public enquiry was recently made into the circumstances attending the promotion, business transactions and failure of the Klondike and Columbian Goldfields, Ltd., which