

hill, in the vicinity of Hunker creek, but on the supposition that these finds are actual and important, it is in the highest degree probable that other localities within the present known alluvial field within a thirty mile radius of Dawson will also be found to be stanniferous. On the other hand it is well to remember, as a reason for accepting the report with caution that foundationless rumours of similar discoveries of tin by placer miners in the States have not been uncommon in the past. Should, however, tin in payable quantities be found in the Yukon, a very important industry may result therefrom. At the present time the price of the metal is high, and production of late years has considerably fallen off, while consumption is on the increase, and is bound to continue year by year, as commerce spreads, so long as prices do not rise above the point that would render the metal too expensive to be commercially utilised, and so long as no cheaper metal or alloy is found to take its place. The chief source of the world's tin supply is the Federated Malay States, but it is a significant fact that during the past seven years the productive area in that country has not been added to, notwithstanding that large and previously inaccessible tracts of land have been opened up by roads and railways. In Great Britain but twenty tin mines are now in operation, and in other important tin producing countries, such as the Dutch West Indies, New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania, indications do not point towards an early considerable increase of output. The tin miner in the Yukon, however, would have many difficulties against which to contend. The high cost of labour, supplies and transport, the distance from markets and the intemperate climate would probably prevent him from working for five or six months in the year and would place him at a serious disadvantage in competing in the world's market. But most of these disabilities might and doubtless will disappear or be overcome in the course of time, for already conditions are very different from what they were even a year ago.

B. C. IRON AND A POSSIBLE AUSTRALIAN MARKET.

THERE is a saying to the effect that he who aims at the moon may hit the tree top. Without indulging in extravagant speculation, there is a practical way of considering possibilities which, by the exercise of a little determination and a great deal of refusal to be discouraged, may transform some at least of what "might be" into what "can be," and of what "can be" into what "is."

The meeting of colonial premiers which is to take place in London this summer, should be fraught with important results to British Columbia. The first and most obvious thing that the interests of the Province require is the establishing of relations with the Australian Commonwealth. In Australia there should be one of the best of our future markets and here, it has already been pointed out, the product of our iron mines would find a ready sale, since the imports of iron in all its forms were, as long ago as 1898, about \$43,000,000. The best steel manufactured in the world at present is made from the magnetite ores of Sweden. In Sweden practically no coal deposits exist; in British

Columbia not only are there excellent and extensive deposits of magnetite, but coal and fluxes are abundant. An English engineer has been investigating the possibilities of a steel shipbuilding industry for Canada and states that the Dominion, with its wonderful resources, will in future be able to beat the world in the manufacture of steel, and there are no economic reasons, why, in the future, iron should not be manufactured as cheaply on the British Pacific as on the Atlantic sea-board. American capitalists, as usual the first in the field, have been for sometime past developing the magnetite deposits on the West Coast of Vancouver Island and ore from this locality is shortly to be sent to Washington to be converted into pig iron. The operations of this syndicate consequently are, under existing circumstances, of little, if any, benefit to the country, more especially as the workmen employed are Chinese. The establishment of blast furnaces in British Columbia at the present time is, however, rightly enough regarded as impracticable, as the local consumption of iron is quite insignificant, and with a limited production it would not be possible to produce iron cheaply enough to successfully compete even for the relatively small Puget Sound trade; the bonus granted by the Dominion government on iron manufactured in Canada, hardly offsetting the duty imposed on manufactured iron entering the United States. There is, nevertheless, an undoubted future for British Columbia iron, but this future is entirely dependent on the development of markets and the building up of an ocean-carrying trade.

The circumstances leading to the closing down of the Van Anda mines and smelter appear to be sufficiently disgraceful. It seems that the mine was acquired under bond from the trustees of the proprietary company by an American syndicate. This syndicate may or may not have entered into the arrangement in good faith, but at any rate in consideration of a small initial payment permission was granted them to operate the mines for a certain length of time on the understanding that the second payment on the bond would fall due in March. The trustees of the Van Anda company, however, in entering into this arrangement seemingly neglected to ascertain the financial standing of the syndicate, or to take steps to guard against damage to the property. The syndicate, untrammelled by restrictions of any kind, commenced operations by stoping out all the available ore in the Cornell mine, which they very effectually "gutted." For a time, while this work was in progress, the employees at the mine and smelter received their pay, although not punctually; but during the past two months no wages have been paid, and the miners becoming alarmed when the second payment on the bond was not met at maturity, seized the matte at the smelter in satisfaction of their claim. The proceeds from the sale of this matte, however, will not be sufficient to pay the men the full amount owing them, and it is doubtful whether the balance of the claim will be collectible. As a result, therefore, of dealing with these irresponsible persons, the trustees of the Van Anda company have now the satisfaction of knowing that the mines, which have been gutted of ore, are several thousands of dollars less valuable, and consequently less saleable, than before the arrangement with the syndicate was entered into, while they are also morally, if not legally, responsible for the loss suffered by the miners in the affair. The history of the Van Anda company is one continuous record of maladministration, and the sooner the mines, which are really valuable, pass into more capable hands the better for everyone concerned.