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BRITISH COLUMBIA MINERAL PRODUCTION.

The annual mining review published by the "Daily News," of Nelson, gives a comprehensive idea of the progress of the mining industry of the Province of British Columbia, such as cannot as yet be obtained from any other source. The production of minerals last year shows even more clearly than before that British Columbia is, without doubt, the mineral province of the Dominion, notwithstanding that the rich finds of cobalt in Northern Ontario place the latter province in a higher position than before.

The considerable advance made in the year just closed is the more gratifying for the reason that the increase is not alone due to the higher average prices of copper, silver, and lead, as compared with those of 1904. A materially increased tonnage of minerals has also contributed largely to the gain made, and in this respect the improvement appears to be permanent rather than temporary, which is still more satisfactory. It is true that in several districts there has been a decrease, but in only one, namely, the Coast, has this been serious, and even here there is the sufficient reason that this was in part brought about by a labor difficulty that prevented one colliery from contributing its ordinary share to the year's total production. This, namely coal, is the only mineral that did not exceed in quantity as well as value the production of 1904.

Classifying the production by districts, the results of the year are by no means unsatisfactory. The decreases, with the exception of that on the Coast, explained above, were small, and more than counterbalanced by gains in other districts. An important feature was the large increase in East Kootenay, due mainly to the enlarged output of lead from St. Eugene, as a consequence not only of the bounty granted by

the Dominion Government, but of the higher average price of the metal. An increase in the Boundary section of Yale district, amounting to 33 per cent. is the result of a much larger production of copper-gold ore, and of the higher average price of copper throughout the year.

A large proportion of the net gain of \$325,000 in silver is due to heavy increases of production in the Fort Steele district of East Kootenay, and in the Slocan. On the other hand, the Lardeau section produced somewhat less.

Summed up, the mining review demonstrates a new high record for mineral production, the total of the figures showing:—Metalliferous, \$15,913,000; non-metalliferous, \$5,050,000; grand total, \$20,963,000; as compared with \$18,977,359 for the year previous. In values the minerals produced were:—Gold, placer, \$1,110,000; lode, \$5,640,000; silver, \$2,045,000; copper, \$5,430,000; lead, \$2,368,000; zinc, \$320,000; coal, \$3,090,000; coke, \$1,210,000; building materials, etc., \$750,000; placer gold and coal show a decrease from 1904 of \$5,300 and \$670,884; all others a big increase. The former total banner production of minerals was for 1901, \$20,086,550 when the quantities of minerals produced were:—Gold, 279,000 ounces; silver, 3,587,710 ounces; copper, 36,200,000 pounds; lead, 57,200,000 pounds; zinc, 13,330 tons; coal, 1,030,000 tons, and coke, 242,000 tons of 2,240 pounds each; placer gold decreased 265 ounces; coal, 223,628 tons; all others show increase. All the smelters in the Yale-Kootenay are working. Many of the old ones have increased their capacity. New plants at Rosebery, Kaslo, and Frank, have been erected, and the plant at Pilot Bay, Kootenay Lake, closed down for past six years, is now at work once more. So, altogether, Mr. Byron E. Walker's assertion that the mining and smelting of metalliferous ores in British Columbia is in a sounder position than ever before, is amply borne out by the facts.