

CASSIAR AND ITS PROSPECTS.

The yearly report of the British Columbia Board of Trade, which has just been issued for 1897, has the following encouraging remarks in regard to the mining possibilities of Cassiar, and to the prospects of the Cassiar Central Railroad in connection therewith. Speaking first of the possibilities of the district, the report says.

"Immediately north of Cariboo is the district of Cassiar, an immense country, very little prospected. Several of the waterways have afforded rich placer diggings.

"It is hardly within the scope of this report to do more than mention the Yukon gold fields which lie north of Cassiar in the Northwest Territory of Canada. The latest excitement resulted from discoveries on the Klondyke river and tributaries. Some of these are reported by old miners to equal California in early days in richness. It is believed that this mineral belt extends to Cassiar and that the whole of the divide will be found to be rich in gold."

Then as to the railroad and its proposed connections the Board of Trade speaks as follows:

"It is a matter for congratulation to find British capitalists interesting themselves in transportation enterprise in this province, as it affords some assurance that the accounts of the great natural resources of British Columbia are gaining credit in established centers of finance. The charter of the Cassiar Central Railway has been acquired by such persons. Although the railway in this case will be short, probably not more than 75 miles, an immense area will be tributary to it. Fort Wrangel, which is open to deep-sea vessels, will, in the meantime, be the western starting point; from thence passengers and freight will be taken on the company's steamers to Telegraph creek, Sturgeon river, where the railway will begin. The first eastern terminus will be at Dease lake.

It is proposed that the company's steamers run on this lake and on the Laird and Frances rivers, tributaries to the Mackenzie river, which flows into the Arctic ocean. A few portages only will be necessary to control navigable waters extending over at least 1,000 miles. It is expected that preliminary surveys will be made immediately, and that the railway will be completed before the close of 1899."

CORRECT ENOUGH.

The Revelstoke Herald in an article that scathingly comments on the Orphan Boy swindle, rightly remarks that regrettable though that affair is, it cannot be held responsible for the general lack

"hits the nail on the head" sharply enough in the following summary of the situation in England:

"All mining ventures are at present in the cold in the English market, which however does not prevent capital being forthcoming for what they regard over there as legitimate enterprises, with £1 or £5 shares and everything regular and to suit the English taste. The little venture to which we are accustomed do not attract the public eye over there. In point of fact an English investor would regard a proposition to purchase a block of non-assessable shares of the face value of one dollar at 15 cents in about the same light as an invitation to sit into the three-card game with a couple of suspicious looking strangers in a railway carriage. They are not accustomed to that kind of thing, and they are a bit "set" in their ways over there."

THE FERN GOLD MINING AND MILLING CO., Ltd.

On the mines of this Company, which owns the Fern, the Eureka and the Hidden Treasure claims, near Hall Creek in the Nelson District, active development work has been for some time proceeding under the auspices of an influential directorate of Vancouver men, including Mr. F. C. Innes, President, Capt. Tatlow, Vice-President, and Messrs. S. O. Richards and C. C. Bennett. Fifty men are now at work on the mine and the whole of the 100,000 shares offered to the public have been sold, to provide for development work, there being a good demand for blocks of stock at 50 cents. The vein is stated to be widening to six feet and the stamp mill will early in September begin work on the ore which is part free milling and part concentrating. Care will be taken by the use of the vanners to save the concentrates. The mill was originally intended to be a 10-stamp one, but its capacity is now to be doubled, the stamps being 1000-pound ones. Ore is already being hauled to the mill site along the Company's tramway, which is some 3,000 feet in length. Stopping and drift work has revealed the greater width of the vein and proved that at least 50 per cent. of the ore is free, the remainder concentrating. The Company's capital is \$200,000, divided into 800,000 shares of 25 cents. The success of this free milling proposition will mean much for the Nelson district, hitherto chiefly noted for the rich silver deposits of the Silver King and other good mines, though gold-bearing ores have at numerous points been located, not hitherto largely worked.

VERY LOWTONE.

This is what the Spokane Chronicle has to say of claim jumping: The fall-

cations and a great loss of property interest to the holders of shares in different companies. Just why there should be such great indignation against these men who have relocated mines, the owners of which neglected to pay the license, it is difficult to see. If the owner of a claim fails to do his assessment work within one year from the date of recording it, the claim is open to anyone to relocate it. Those mining companies whose claims have been jumped have nobody but themselves to blame, and a man would be a blooming chump who allowed an opportunity to secure a valuable mining property to go by without taking advantage of it."

Such advice is frankly immoral, but it has one merit, being bare faced and unclouded by hypocrisy. Happily genuine Western American miners take, as a rule, a very different view of claim jumping from that of this paper of Spokane. We assert that to allow a claim to be jumped by reason only of a slight delay in the payment of a company's license fee were to punish a tardy payer altogether unduly, and at the same time encourage predatory claim jumping, rascality which whenever it exists is a curse to a mining camp.

GOLDEN CACHE DEVELOPMENT.

Important deals are now on foot in connection with the Golden Cache mines and stock, an English syndicate having quietly purchased at \$1.70, 10,000 shares of Treasury stock in the Company, and, it is understood, since absorbed the large Gooderham holding in the undertaking. The object of the Syndicate, which acted on the report of an expert, is evidently to obtain control, if possible, at rates profitable to its members, of the bulk of the Golden Cache stock. The English syndicate is already well on the way to share much of the control of the Company, with the largest single holder, the Dominion Developing Company, Limited. The movement is significant and probably heralds a very considerable future participation of British capital in the development of the Lillooet free milling gold country. Indeed, this probability will become a certainty in the event of the success of the Golden Cache mines, on which the fortunes of that region so largely depend.

WEST KOOTENAY SMELTING.

The C. P. R. will do what it can to encourage further smelting and refining in West Kootenay, but cannot, as it is now stated on good authority, do much in the way of improving transit and reducing freight charges as regards the Trail district for at least eighteen months. It will fully take that time to make the necessary rail connections. It is conse-