

ed and dealt with on the market, they can realise their holdings long before the mine is paying a cent. The sale or dealing in the Royalty shares only affect speculators and will not affect the shareholders one way or another."

While doubtless the new Royalty system so interestingly described by our correspondent is, in several respects, a vast improvement over old promoting methods, it is clear that it is just as open to abuse, but the truth of the well-worn saying that you cannot make men moral by Act of Parliament has been long ere this sufficiently demonstrated. Again, particularly in the case of low-grade mines, any such fixed charge as thirty shillings per ounce of gold recovered would be an almost impossible burden, but of course, our correspondent does not intend to imply that this proportion is to form an arbitrary standard. A reasonable percentage of net profit earnings set aside to represent royalty to promoters and vendors would be obviously the only equitable basis upon which such an arrangement could be effected if the interests of shareholders are to be at all considered.

The statement made by Mr. Miner, president of the Granby Mining Smelting and Power Co., the other day that the improvements at the Granby smelter, now under construction, are being paid for entirely out of the profits of the last and this year's operations is extremely satisfactory. This company has not been very forward in bringing out a balance sheet and report, but, on the contrary, the main subscribers to the shares are the original subscribers, when the various companies now consolidated were promoted, and if they are satisfied the public has not any very serious reason of complaint. This company's operations have for some reason or another always been subjected to more than the ordinary amount of criticism, but in looking back over its history it is difficult to see where greater economy of organization or efficiency of working could have been attained. The ore in the Knob Hill and Ironsides is exceedingly low grade. It has always been felt that its successful treatment was in the nature of an experiment. But, certainly, if it had not been successful there would have been something very far out in the original calculations of its nature and value. It has, apparently on the contrary, proved fully as amenable to treatment as was expected, and the various economics originated in connection with the mine and smelter have proved most efficient and valuable. According to Mr. Miner the cost of smelting has already been reduced to \$1.90 a ton and the increase in the plant, now being paid for out of profits, is expected not merely to double the tonnage but to still further decrease the cost of treatment per ton. Under these circumstances there is fairly good authority for the assertion that the enterprise is a proved success. This of course does not touch the question of the capitalisation of the company which, if it were con-

sidered as anything but a mere conventional figure, is excessively high. It must be years yet, at the best, before the company can hope to pay such dividends on a capital of \$15,000,000, not to mention \$20,000,000, as would justify the buying and selling of the shares at par. In the meantime a report and balance sheet giving the average value per ton of the ore treated, (for this is a fact that has never been disclosed by the management), will be awaited with great interest and, if satisfactory, will set finally at rest the fears of the most sceptical.

Reports which have the hall mark of authenticity, so far as they go, give intelligence of the discovery of virgin placer ground in the Cariboo district at the head waters of the Horsefly river. It is, of course, impossible to hazard a guess at the present time whether the creeks discovered will prove at all important or extensive, and it is unlikely that any competent opinion can be risked before the middle of next summer. But at the same time it is permissible to hope that placer ground of real importance has been found. There never was a territory, except the land of Ophir, in which there has been a longer and more painful hiatus between the glories of its placer days and the more settled and permanent prosperity brought about by modern methods of gold mining, than the Cariboo district. It is only now beginning to be realised what immense opportunities lie in its beds of gravel when hydraulic power has been brought to bear on them. Even now the progress made is slow and halting. An important discovery of virgin soil would change all that. It would bring population in, and the miner with his pan and rocker would be followed by the capitalist with his flume and monitor. Cariboo would again become a busy centre of industry, and the conditions of development are so changed from the early days that that industry would not be confined to one particular locality but would spread and ramify over all the gold-producing area. The effect also upon the general business interests of the Province would be most satisfactory. This is, perhaps, quite a superstructure to build upon the reports we have now to go upon. But it is better to have our eyes fixed upon the smallest apparent opening in our great unexplored territory, and to estimate its possibilities, carefully remembering that they are only possibilities which may never be realised, than to awake too late to what was possible to take full advantage of what has become actual.

Platinum is now a more valuable metal than gold, being quoted at \$21 an ounce. In 1899 it was quoted at about \$15, in 1900 in April it rose to \$18.20, and has again advanced this year. An agitation has been inaugurated in Germany to have platinum restricted by agreement to those uses only for which it is an absolute necessity, as at present the demand is greater than the