

The Mining Record.

VOL. IX.

MARCH, 1902.

NO. 3.

BRITISH COLUMBIA MINING RECORD

Devoted to the Mining Interests of The Pacific Northwest.

PUBLISHED BY

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA RECORD, LIMITED

H. PORTIER LAIB, Managing Editor.

Victoria, B. C., Office: Bank of Montreal Chambers.
London Office: 21 Coleman Street, E. C.
Montreal: Gray's Agency.
Denver, Col.: National Advertising Co.
San Francisco: Duke's Agency.

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS:

Canada and the United States, one year - - \$2.00
Great Britain and Foreign, one year - - - 2.50

Advertising Rates on Application.

Address all communications to

THE MANAGING EDITOR, B. C. RECORD, LTD.,
P. O. Drawer 645, Victoria, B. C.

PUBLISHERS NOTICE.

The public is cautioned against having any dealings with a person calling himself L. T. or H. R. Terry, who is representing himself as an authorised agent of the British Columbia Record, Limited, and in this capacity has recently solicited subscriptions to the BRITISH COLUMBIA MINING RECORD.

THE FUEL SUPPLY QUESTION.

THE possibility of an insufficient fuel supply for Canadian smelters has been mooted lately. That area of the Crow's Nest field which contains the best and most easily mined coal, is intersected by three creeks which cut the coal measures and the banks of whose canyons form the most economic, in fact the only economic, portals of the mines. Naturally these strategic points number six, two on each creek. Five of them are already under the control of the Crow's Nest Coal company. The south side of the Morissey creek is the only vacant mining site. It is argued that the government should immediately select its coal lands and include the south side of Morissey creek therein, in order to have an effective leverage against the Crow's Nest Coal company in the event of discriminative action against Canadian smelters becoming the policy of that company. As regards the general policy of opening up the American market to Crow's Nest coal and coke, there can be no two opinions. The cheap coal and coke on which our mining and smelting industries depend, can only be secured by a very large and regular output. The greater the market, the larger the output, and, up to a certain maximum at least, the less the cost

of production per ton. The opening of the American market could not of itself interfere with the supply to Canadian smelters, unless it were coupled with a direct policy of discrimination against them to serve purposes ulterior to the mining and marketing of coal and coke. Do such purposes exist? Do they exist in the minds of the present management of the Crow's Nest Coal company? This does not appear to have been proven. A motive has been alleged which has not, so far as we know, given birth to any specific acts. But such a motive might come into existence at any moment, and therefore, it is most important that the vital fuel supply for our mines and smelters should not be the possession of an uncontrolled monopoly. The Crow's Nest Coal company, when incorporated, was recognised to be in the nature of a monopoly. Regulations were placed upon its operations, and that these regulations might be in no danger of evasion, "hostages for good behavior," as the *Monetary Times*, of Toronto, very correctly expresses it, were given. These hostages were 50,000 acres of coal lands to be selected by the government, and 3,840 acres to fall to the Canadian Pacific Railway company, that corporation, however, being debarred from mining coal before 1907.

It is quite clear that if there is no economic outlet for the coal in these lands they will be quite ineffective as hostages. Therefore the government, to safeguard the interests of the consumers, should lay hands on the south side of Morissey creek. But it is also quite clear that, if the government leased this land to an independent company, that company could be only nominally independent of either the Canadian Pacific Railway company, or of the Great Northern Railway company. If it were really controlled by the former, that would be an evasion of the contract made at the time of the incorporation of the Crow's Nest company, if by the latter then the fuel monopoly would be complete and the hostages for its regulation virtually surrendered. We submit that the proper course for the government is to reserve this land with its valuable mining site. Then if the Crow's Nest Coal company shows by any overt act that it is prepared to violate the provisions safeguarding the interests of Canadian consumers, of whom the Canadian Pacific Railway company is the chief, such action might be taken by the government as would ensure a competitive supply even to the extent of permitting the Canadian Pacific Railway company, or a company controlled by that corporation, to mine the coal. To act now as if the Crow's Nest Coal company were already a guilty party, would be as unfair to that company, as