

Rossland Weekly Miner.

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THERE MUST BE NO FALTERING.

The Miners' Union last night decided that work should be stopped on the mines of the Rossland Great Western group, and the general assumption is that the other mines of the camp will be similarly treated. Thus so far the agitators have had their way. The irresistible conclusion from the condition now reached is that there must be no faltering shown by the people who are opposed to the agitator evil. A great crisis has arrived in the history of Rossland. A most important question is about to be decided once and for all. The issue is plain. This city is either going to be handed over to the agitators, or it is not. To put it another way, the agitators are either right or wrong. If they are right they deserve the support and sympathy of the entire community; if they are wrong in their contentions they must be censured and denounced. There is no escaping the issue. It is plain and clear-cut. It must be met. The manner in which it is decided will tell what is to be the fate of Rossland, for the next few years at all events.

RESENT TYRANNY!

Elsewhere in this issue we publish a statement made to a reporter of the Rossland Miner by Mr. Bernard MacDonald and Mr. Edmund B. Kirby regarding the extraordinary situation now affecting the mining industry of this section. What they have to say might quite as easily and appropriately and as truthfully have been uttered by any business man in the community. The events of the past few days have brought home to the people of Rossland—the great bulk of the members of the Miners' Union included—the knowledge that a dastardly attempt has been made to precipitate by foul means a strike which would spell ruin to the greater portion of those who are seeking a livelihood in this camp. There can be no doubt whatever as to the accuracy of that alarming statement. Instead of a fair, legitimate expression of judgment on the question of the expediency of going on strike being asked from the members of the Miners' Union, there have been employed methods to obtain a decision favorable to the views of the little coterie of agitating manipulators which ought to bring the blush of shame to the face of every honest miner. The facts of the case are clearly set forth in the interview with Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Kirby. Instead of the result of the ballot being communicated to the men most interested—the miners—the latter are treated as unworthy spies and the whole matter pocketed by a small committee who shall decide at their leisure what particular fate is in store for the miners, for the people of Rossland and this section of the province of British Columbia.

Of what sort of stuff are the great bulk of the miners employed in this camp made to stand such an atrocious and damnable piece of juggling without asserting their God-given manhood, their inalienable right to be treated as free men among men! Are they not quite as capable of thought, quite as capable of arriving at a wise decision on so important a matter as the few who pose as leaders? It is their interests which are at stake. It is their wives and their children who will feel the pinch of poverty should the order go forth—whether by their own volition or any other circumstance—that they should be denied the right to labor. Then let them act like men! Let them wrest from the grasp of the manipulators the power to decide their policy in this grave matter. Let them strike if they choose to. But for decency's sake, for the sake of their

own manhood and self-respect let them strike fair!

We have not attempted to discuss the question as to who is right or wrong in this controversy between the mine managers and the miners—that is something which does not in the slightest concern the purposes of this article. The mine managers may be villains of the deepest dye and the miners may be justified in going on strike tomorrow for all we know. That does not concern us at present. But we do know that the time has arrived when a protest should be entered by the union men themselves and by the people of Rossland against the antics of a little crowd of malcontents and agitators who are juggling with the fate of Rossland and its citizens with a recklessness which bids fair to shatter the interests of nearly all who have made this city their home.

AN END TO AN ABOMINABLE CONDITION.

There can be no doubt in the minds of those who are conversant with the situation affecting the mining industry in Rossland that the time has arrived when all who have the best interests of the city at heart should unite to stamp out of existence the agitator evil. We believe a determination of that sort has been reached by the people of Rossland; and co-operating with them in that movement will be found a large majority of the members of the Miners' Union. So certain are we of this being the case that we think it not at all premature to offer congratulations at the happy circumstance; and we predict that before many weeks have passed peace and prosperity will prevail to a degree which would have been thought impossible a short time ago. It passes comprehension that such an abominable condition of affairs as that which prevailed in this camp up to a few days ago should have been tolerated so long. It is but the bald truth to declare that for a couple of years past Rossland has been an agitator-ridden community. Had the great bulk of the wage earners been left alone there would have been no talk whatever of labor troubles. But they were not left alone. The professional agitator got in his face work. He labored unceasingly at the task of sowing the seeds of discontent and discord. And the seeds took root, to the extent that there grew up a clique which undertook to shape the destinies of all who were engaged in the task of earning a livelihood in this section. The members of this little clique ruled with an iron hand. It mattered not that the majority of the wage earners were satisfied with their lot—they were told that they were being imposed upon and that they should revolt against oppressive conditions. There was very little effective opposition manifested towards the damnable schemings of the gang of agitators. The business men of the community were terrorized into according them support and sympathy. Instead of the evil being grappled with as promptly as it showed its wretched head it was winked at—or, worse—encouraged.

But a change has come over the spirit of our dreams. Rossland has roused herself, asserted herself—and an abominable condition of affairs has come to an end. This may seem an extravagantly optimistic view to take of the situation, but we believe it to be justified by the existing circumstances. There has been no resolution framed in words and publicly uttered by the people of Rossland, but there can be no doubt whatever that an unwritten compact has been entered into by the whole people to join hands in opposition to the schemes of those mouthing hot-heads who too long have been permitted to trifle with the fate of our communities in the whole world.

There is to be—there has been—no attack on the principles of unionism—that would be the height of folly. No one but a fool would attempt to deny the right of free men to band themselves together for the purpose of legitimately bettering their conditions. But there must be no more bastard unionism with its rampant and insolent aggressiveness. The people will not stand it. They have been surfeited with stagnation and unrest served up to them by the hands of the demagogues, and now desire an era of peace and prosperity.

Remaining steadfastly true to themselves, refusing to obey the crack of the whip in the hands of the agitator and

his satellites, the people of Rossland may bid good-bye to the wretched uncertainty and depression which have prevailed all too long and face the future confident of witnessing the best of good times in a community where peace and harmony shall reign undisturbed.

A PLAIN DUTY.

A plain duty devolves upon the people of Rossland—and especially the business men—in connection with the situation at present affecting the mining industry in this camp. That duty is to declare that there shall be an end to the period of unrest and depression which has prevailed so long as the result of threatening labor troubles. They have the matter in their own hands. All that is required is united action and public expression to be given to the views which none of them hesitate to express in private conversation. It is the universal belief that were it not for the work of a small number of agitators peace and harmony and prosperity would prevail in this camp today. One can hear assertions of that sort uttered on all sides by people of all classes. And there is not the slightest doubt that the contention is absolutely correct. That being the case then, it must be manifest to the most obtuse intellect that the people of Rossland—more particularly perhaps the business men—have the remedy for a deplorable and abominable state of affairs in their own hands. If they choose to declare that there shall be an end to the period of unrest and uncertainty and depression there will be an end of that very sort of thing tomorrow. We think that that assertion is capable of being supported by argument absolutely convincing. What are the main features of the situation as it stands today? One thousand two hundred men are employed in the mines of this camp. Less than half of their number are members of the Union; and of the latter only a very small portion are in any way discontented and in favor of a strike. If that be the case—and we do not think it can be successfully contradicted—why is it, then, that there is any danger of a strike? The answer is very simple. The little band of agitators are allowed to work unimpeded at the task of stirring up strife and discord. The conservative element have been cowed into submission by the insolent aggressiveness of the few; the business men of the community view the process of working ruin with an apathy born of fear of the boycott, and speak in whispers of the dangers which, like the sword of Damocles, have been constantly hanging over their heads. When there should have been revolt against tyranny there has been silent submission, and as a consequence tyranny has triumphed.

Is not the foregoing estimate of the situation pretty nearly correct? We think so. And we think all are agreed that the time has arrived when there must be a change. Nothing is to be gained by silence. On the contrary, vigorous protest vigorously outspoken will remedy the evil very quickly. Let it once be understood by the agitators that their illegitimate attempts to coerce the majority into commencing a ruinous conflict will be frowned upon and attacked by that most powerful of all weapons, public opinion, and there will be a speedy and complete subsidence of the disturbing element. Because that is true we say the people of Rossland have the remedy which all are desirous of applying in their own hands.

Purged of its obnoxious elements the Miners' Union ought to receive the encouragement and support of everyone in the community. The right of men to band themselves together for the purpose of bettering their condition by legitimate effort will be denied by no one who claims to possess ordinary intelligence; but the moment such an organization is used as a weapon by designing agitators that moment it becomes not only an enemy to the peace and prosperity of the community, but a menace to the welfare of all honest and sincere workers who are numbered in its ranks.

BRITISH COLUMBIA MINES.

Those who have been disposed to condemn the Rossland Miner for pointing out that the mining industry of the province is being hampered by the existence of unwise legislation will be surprised to learn that that most ex-

cellent and cautious newspaper, the Vancouver News Advertiser, edited by ex-Finance Minister Cotton, holds similar views to our own on this important question. Under the Caption "British Columbia's Mines" it says in a leading article: The reports of the Provincial Department of Mines for 1900—extracts from which we have given in our mining columns in yesterday's and to-day's issues—should be considered as showing a progress, which, on the whole, and under the circumstances that have prevailed, is not unsatisfactory. At the same time the statistics furnished by the report of the output of our mines of every description show that as compared with other mineral producing countries—either within the British Empire or elsewhere—the production of British Columbia is small and unimportant in the world's annual yield. It is well to impress this fact on those who are inclined to exaggerate the importance of the position which the mining industry in this Province has attained, since they are apt to complain that outside capital is slow in its recognition of the field presented in British Columbia for profitable investment in mining enterprises. As a matter of fact, when the results are considered, it will be seen that this is not the case, but that, on the contrary, foreign capital has been forthcoming to a very considerable extent, although it must be admitted, with returns to its owners which cannot be regarded as either satisfactory or calculated to induce them to largely extend their operations.

But apart from this, the progress of the mining industry in 1900, as shown in the report, must be regarded as satisfactory when all the circumstances are considered. As every resident in the Province is aware, the mining industry has had many difficulties to contend with during the past two years. In Kootenay the disputes between the mineowners and the miners in connection with the Eight Hour Law greatly interfered with mining operations during a large part of the year 1899 and a portion of 1900. The low price of lead and the consequent difficulties encountered by mineowners in disposing of their product, also caused much embarrassment, making the owners of some properties disinclined to extend their operations until a more satisfactory situation was reached, and making it impossible for others to continue mining with profitable results. In other districts, as in the Boundary district, for example, the owners of valuable deposits of copper ores could not dispose of their output on satisfactory terms until railway and smelting facilities were afforded. All these drawbacks and obstacles to mining developments on a large scale, have been or are being gradually overcome, and in some parts of the Province the industry may be now considered to be on a satisfactory business basis, and to give promise of large expansion within a short time. That is, of course, on the supposition that interruptions do not occur from labor disputes. There have been rumours that these might take place in some parts of Kootenay, but it is to be hoped that moderation and wise counsels will actuate both parties and that the mining industry there will not again be retarded by such a cause.

Notwithstanding all these drawbacks the year 1900 shows marked progress as regards the aggregate value of the mineral production of the Province. The total was \$16,344,751 as compared with \$12,363,131 in 1899, an increase of \$3,981,620. The production of gold from gravel claims shows a slight falling off from that of 1899. Hydraulic mining is at present in what may be regarded as a position preparatory to large operations and it may be fairly anticipated that the next year or two will show large increases in the gold from hydraulic claims, both in the Cariboo and Cassiar districts.

Quartz or lode mining made fair progress in 1900, as shown by the yield in gold and silver and especially in copper and lead, and would have made a still better showing but for the difficulties to which we have already referred. In British Columbia, as in the early days of many other mining countries, the industry has suffered and progress been retarded by unskillful management or even dishonest practices on the part of those to whom the control of operations was entrusted. Unwise speculation in mining stocks and a lack of the requisite capital in connection with mining schemes promoted rather than stock-jobbing purposes than for legitimate mining operations, must also be considered as playing some part in retarding progress in this industry.

It is difficult to avoid the opinion that the legislation in regard to mines passed at the two sessions of the present Legislature has been detrimental and likely to discourage the vigorous prosecution of the industry. Until quartz mining had really reached a sound and businesslike basis, no change should have been attempted in the rate of taxation on the output. It was admitted when the change was made in 1897 in the method of taxing mines that it was an experiment and that the results might show that some re-arrangement or alteration in the in-

fluence of the tax might be necessary in order to make the taxation bear equitably and evenly on the different classes of mines. The experience of four years has shown that there was good ground for that view, and the action of the Legislature in doubling the tax under the conditions which exist must be condemned as neither politic in regard to encouraging the investment of further capital in our mines, nor as based on that knowledge of fiscal matters which should be brought to bear on questions of that character. We admit that additional revenues must be raised unless more economy and prudence are shown in regard to the Provincial expenditure. But that fact does not justify the crude and clumsy means which have been adopted with the view of augmenting the Treasury receipts, among which this action in regard to the Mineral Tax must certainly be classed. The amount of revenue thus gained does not compensate for the indirect injury which such financial methods impose on an industry.

THE CONDITION OF THE NAVY

It is somewhat astonishing to colonialists to read in the dispatches that grave fear exists in the minds of many people in England that the British navy is inadequate for the task it might be called upon to perform; but we must conclude that the alarm is justified when such able critics as Lord Charles Beresford join those who are uttering a warning note. He has often been blamed for too great readiness to speak out his mind in the way of criticism of the administration of naval affairs. But that he speaks with the authority of knowledge and actual experience no one can deny. When he conceives it to be his duty as a patriotic man to point out matters which call for improvement in order to make efficient the force upon which rests the prosperity and even the safety of the empire, it does not seem just that he should receive censure for doing so publicly, instead of through red-tape channels leading to official pigeon-holes.

The fact that the empire's naval supremacy has never been seriously challenged since 1805 has had the effect, it is not too much to say, of lulling a section of the British public into a feeling of over-confidence, coupled with the idea that the sailors of Great Britain being so much braver and more skilful than the sailors of other nations, it is not necessary for Great Britain to maintain a numerical superiority in ships. There was ground for this idea during the days of sails, when the British sail a being more constantly at sea than the French, Spanish or Russian sailor, acquired a greater skill in seamanship. With modern ships and armaments, however, no such superiority can be confidently counted upon. Taking into consideration the energy with which the great powers of Europe, the United States and Japan are developing their navies, the special care spent in the training of the personnel, and the knowledge shown in the design and constructing of their ships, guns and appliances for working their armaments, it is wise for Great Britain to assume that ship for ship and gun for gun, and man for man, she is no more than equal to her neighbors in fighting power.

To maintain the supremacy of the sea, therefore, the superiority of the navy in numbers and the highest pitch of efficiency in war organization must be maintained. In 1886 Admiral Sir John Hay and Admiral Seymour tendered their resignations as naval lords of the admiralty, to protest against the scant provision made in the estimates for building new ironclads. Again in 1888, when a general feeling of alarm was aroused in Great Britain at the backward state of the naval construction programme, compared with that of France, a popular agitation headed by a distinguished seaman, Sir Geoffrey Hornby, succeeded in bringing about the passage of the naval defence act of the following year, by which seventy warships were provided for at a cost of £21,000,000. Lord Charles Beresford has been following in the steps of Admiral Sir John Hay and Admiral Seymour. In all three cases these officers had seats in parliament. That Lord Charles Beresford's criticisms could be in any sense of a seriousness comparable to the criticism called forth on the occasions mentioned, is, of course, impossible. The navy estimates for 1901-2 provide for a net expenditure of £30,875,500, being an increase of £14,083,600 in five years. The strength of the imperial navy is fully up to the standard of equality to any two other powers, and in regard to ships in commission, strong fleets are maintained on every station. The main strength of the Russian navy is concentrated in the Far East, and that of France in the Mediterranean. And there is no question that on both stations Great Britain is more than able to hold her own.

"CANADIAN UNIONS"

By a singular co-incidence the Kamloops Standard discussed editorially on almost the same day as did the Rossland Miner the question of the unwisdom of Canadian workmen affiliating with alien labor organizations. The Standard arrives at the same conclusion as ourselves, and the argument it presents in support of its position is very convincing and should be read with attention by all interested in the cause of unionism. We cannot do better than reproduce the Standard's article in full. It is as follows:

"Canadian advocates of the cause of unionism and thoughtful leaders in the ranks of the workmen have a question before them which with no uncertain sound demands their immediate and careful consideration. It must be presumed that the artisans and workmen of this country are desirous of furthering in every way possible the ultimate success of our country in the race for commercial and national prosperity and contentment. It must be presumed that they desire to remain on terms of the greatest possible cordiality with the employer, who, as the agent or the owner of the capital so vital to the opening up and developing of our country, is with the workman worthy of his hire. Having admitted the correctness of these presumptions, the question arises—are the workmen of Canada through their unions right in affiliating with the unions of the United States? Are such affiliations beneficial; will they strengthen the hands of the Canadian workmen and gain for his cause the respect to which it is undoubtedly entitled? With due deference to the cause of international unionism as opposed to national unions we submit that it is not the position of Canadian unions, although nominally one of affiliation with their fellow-artisans to the south, is in reality one of subservience, for with their numerical strength the American unions must control the relation of Canadian unions with their employers—very often to the detriment of the union cause. The Garonne case at Victoria is an instance in point. Victoria foundries offered and were ready to comply with the request of their union employees, but the unions were forced by the strikers on the Sound to keep out until the American foundries were brought to terms. Sympathy with their fellow-workmen is all right in its place, but how many of those who were forced to stay out by the unions believe for one instant that if the boot had been on the other foot that Seattle unions who were in harmony with their employers would have ceased work or refused to do work which Victoria foundries could not do on account of a strike. One thing that can be said in favor of the American union man, as a rule, he is intensely American. For him the United States is the only country, and other peoples and other countries are only the pawns in the game of American progress. He may be at loggerheads with his employers over matters affecting only their relations but he is quite willing to join hands with an American employer in order to effect American ends. Unionism in this country would make a departure which would increase its usefulness to Canadian workmen if it were to cut loose from the apron-strings of the American labor leaders and strike out along lines more in accordance with Canadian institutions and conditions. We have among us labor leaders of undoubted ability who are more competent to grasp the drift of Canadian affairs and to foresee the result of any national effort to secure the welfare of the Canadian workman than are the majority of the glib agitators who as a rule are the heads of international unions. The large sums of money which are annually sent to the headquarters of the various international unions could be better handled by Canadian leaders and the benefit derived from its proper expenditure would be more commensurate with the sacrifices made. At present there is no method of determining whether or not the results justify the expenditure."

It is interesting to recall at this juncture an utterance by Secretary Woodside of the Miners' Union on the occasion of the vote being taken on the question of a strike on April 8th last. The miners voted against a strike. Secretary Woodside in an official statement, which was published in the Rossland Miner, said: "WE ARE NOT DISCOURAGED IN THE LEAST BY THE VOTE CAST TODAY." What did that utterance mean, if it meant anything? Simply that no discouragement was felt at the prospect of peace.

Remarks the Victoria Times: "Unfortunately for the workman, his employers and the country generally, the leaders of labor are not always wise prudent, conservative and judicious men. The demagogue finds a congenial field in the unions and organizations with comprehensive names for the exercise of his reprehensible talents. Unreasonable counsels often prevail and deplorable conflicts are sometimes provoked."

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