

and the Colorado law of compulsory assessment before a claim can be recorded submitted therefor.

These suggestions, if acted upon, would be productive of several, in our opinion, beneficial results. In the first place the man who spends either his time or his money in a bona fide attempt to develop a mineral property, but who by ill-chance or even carelessness omits to regard a trivial technicality of the law would be reasonably safeguarded against serious and complete loss by forfeiture. Secondly, if opportunity was not taken of the reasonable chance afforded, the Government would benefit by the acquisition and sale of the property and not some private individual or "jumper" whose moral, if not legal right, to the work of others is certainly questionable. Again by the means proposed promiscuous staking of claims in new districts would be largely checked, by preventing re-location after one assessment, and lastly a large increase in revenue from mining districts might be counted upon for the prosecution of useful and necessary public works in those localities.

During the past few weeks conditions throughout the Kootenay mining districts are said to have considerably improved, from what causes, however, it is somewhat difficult to say. In the Slo-can, for instance, it is stated that claims are being sold and bonded freely, while a greater number of mines are being worked than at any previous time. If this is true it is somewhat inexplicable, as lead and silver prices are certainly as low as they well can be, and facilities for marketing are unchanged. It is possible, of course, that the reported proposed action of the Idaho lead producers of establishing lead works in the Coeur D'Alene in opposition to the trust, may have something to do with the movement. But as yet this report is the veriest gossip, and probably does not contain an element of truth. In Rossland, of course, the resumption of operations at the Centre Star and War Eagle mines has necessarily had an excellent effect, while the termination of the Fernie strike has enabled the Boundary mines to again continue shipments on a large scale. Really good times in the Kootenay depend, however, on either a general rise in metal prices, or in some of the camps the application of still cheaper methods of treatment, or a combination of both. In the Boundary costs have already been reduced to practically a minimum, but a slight further reduction may be expected upon the completion of the branch railway connecting with the Great Northern system, when freight rates and fuel supplies will probably be considerably less than at present.

It is reported that the Vulcan furnace recently installed at Ferguson is not a metallurgical success. Is that so very astonishing?

The MINING RECORD was, we believe, first in calling attention to the reported discoveries of tin in the Yukon. A contemporary, the *Mining Reporter*, of Denver, Colorado, in a recent issue now announces that an expert sent some time ago to investigate the truth of these rumours has returned and reports that the metal does occur in large deposits. The *Mining Reporter* remarks: "This is welcome news to the tin plate manufacturers, as the world's production of the metal has been steadily decreasing for the last six years, while its utility is becoming more and more pronounced. The price of the metal has more than doubled in this time and grave apprehension has been felt that the present condition would grow worse rather than better. This new discovery is probably authentic and Alaska thus seems to have again demonstrated itself as one of our most valuable possessions. Tin, so far, has not been discovered in the United States proper, in paying quantities, while we are the greatest consumers of the metal." But a still further reduction in cost will have to take place in the Yukon before tin ore, however rich, can be profitably mined.

#### THE MOUNTAIN GROUSE.

Or the Prospector's Lament.

Snow, snow, beautiful snow!

Where is the fellow who wrote,

"Snow, snow, beautiful snow?"

I'd like to get hold of the goat!

I'd bury him deep in his beautiful snow!

How would he like to be me,

Breaking a trail with a pack on my back

In snow well over the knee?

Six long miles from the railroad track

In snow to the top of the hill,

With a good round fifty pounds on my back

Up a grade that is fit to kill:

Snow on the ground and snow in the trees

That falls now and then on your head.

If you stop too long for a "wind," you freeze,

So you plug to the top half-dead.

The idiot who wrote of the "beautiful snow"

Is the self-same silly moke,

Who talks at times with a poet's glow

Of the "scent of the camp-fire glow

"Wreathing blue in the mountain air,

"And curling up to the skies,

"Dispelling thoughts of a town-bred care,"

Did it ever get in his eyes?

As he dodged round a camp-fire trying to cook,

After a twenty-mile grind

"Cross wind-jams and rock-slides?" It does for a book,

But not for a prospector, mind!

I'd like him around when the "skeeters" are thick,

And you build up a darned good "smudge,"

I'd smoke him then till I made him sick,

And he called his own poetry "fudge."

—Richard Lawrence.