

risks to be taken on this account, for it will be a comparatively easy matter to arrange for notice to be given well in advance of any annual meeting of delegates of the more important matters to be debated, so that district organizations may first thoroughly discuss these questions from the local standpoint and instruct their representatives accordingly.

Taking the sixteen or seventeen recommendations made to the Government—all of them admirable in their way and some certainly demanding every consideration—we find that quite a large proportion of them suggest that present sources of revenue should be either cut off altogether or considerably reduced, while another large proportion advise a greater expenditure of public funds. The Government in considering such proposals must necessarily be influenced in some measure by the exigencies of the hour. They are told that if certain courses are pursued capital in very largely increased amounts will flow into the country, that new industries will spring into existence, and that as a natural sequence, population and permanent settlement will result. But however much we may believe these statements, it should not be forgotten that the problem confronting Provincial legislators is no easy one; money is required for the administration of the affairs of the country; the greatest difficulty is at present experienced in providing the necessary revenue from present utilized sources to meet that expenditure; our borrowing powers are limited and money can now only be got at an exceedingly dear rate. It is for the Government to carefully consider whether or not the predictions made by those who desire changes in the law, but which meanwhile would have a direct present effect on the revenue of the Province, are based on any reasonably sure foundation. They are called upon to determine whether they are justified in reducing that revenue and at the same time increasing the expenditures on merely an assurance that the Province will enjoy a greater measure of prosperity in the future. Consequently, if the Mining Association finds that the Government does not embrace immediately all the suggestions that have been tendered, we do not think that the Association need feel thereabout that its advice is not valued or that its influence is in any way lightly regarded.

We propose now to discuss in brief some of the matters presented to the Government by the Executive Committee of the Association, leaving for the time being the question of revenue on one side. The suggestion that the Government should appoint a geologist to examine and report on the alluvial deposits of the country is a most commendable one. It is quite too much to expect that our Provincial Mineralogist, who, while no doubt having a fair all-round knowledge of mining and metallurgy in its several branches and in more than one branch may be regarded as an expert authority, should be a specialist in all lines, and a really comprehensive report from a recognized authority on the alluvial gold deposits of British Columbia would undoubtedly be of the greatest possible value and interest to prospectors and to the investing public. Prob-

ably the best report on the Cariboo and other gold fields yet published was that prepared many years ago for the Geological Survey Department by the late Dr. Dawson in his work on the "Mineral Resources of British Columbia." There is much in this report that might be advantageously included in any new treatise on the subject; in fact, few additions are required beyond the recording of developments since that time, and more extensive reference to the commercial in contradistinction to the scientific side of the matter.

We confess to not being in accord with the proposal to reduce the fees for joint-stock company incorporation registration or licensing, or in respect to the reduction of the charge made for companies' "free miners'" certificates. No desirable company, namely, one adequately capitalized and formed for the purpose of mining along legitimate lines would be in any way deterred from operating in British Columbia by reason of the present moderate imposts. On the other hand, to reduce these charges would be to further encourage the generally impecunious wild-cat sharpers, who would thus escape from contributing to the public treasury the sufficiently moderate amounts they are now compelled to pay. For the very purpose of limiting the promotion of over-capitalized and wild-cat concerns the present tariff charges were incorporated in the Act at a time when the evil was at its height some few years ago. The effect was good and to our mind there is an advantage in repealing or modifying a measure which has proved useful merely because the evil at which it aimed is temporarily less in evidence.

Of the "two per cent." tax little need be said here, for the Government has already taken this question under advisement, proposing to rectify the injustice complained of, and will no doubt devise a system of taxation which will be more acceptable to the mining community. This change, we understand, contemplates the imposition of a tax on the net annual income of mines. If no difficulties present themselves in the matter of arranging for reasons to be made upon an approximately equitable basis, the proposed change from a tax on gross output would appear to be well conceived.

There can be no two opinions as to the justice of the demand that the Government should discontinue the practice of collecting stumpage dues on timber used by the miner for mining purposes and cut on his own claims. The Act distinctly states that a claim owner is entitled to the timber so obtained and used, and yet the royalty has been regularly demanded and generally paid, though nearly always under protest. It is to be hoped that the mining district officials will be at once instructed in the proper interpretation of the law as it stands.

In convention a strong pressure was brought to bear and resolutions were introduced for the repeal of the code of mine signals embodied in the Metalliferous Mines Inspection Act, and of the clauses relating to the inspection of boilers in the Boiler Inspection Act.