

The Natural Hydrocarbons.

Coal.

In that the volume before us has made existing data available to the reader, it has fully justified its preparation. More than this, whilst its author expressly disclaims any attempt at presenting an exhaustive monograph upon geochemistry, he has done something much more desirable. He has given us a readable book that is at once a complete work of reference, and a sufficient resume of the best modern thought upon a subject that hitherto has been beset with discouraging difficulties.

ST. LAWRENCE COAL TRADE.

Late in April five of the Dominion Coal Company's fleet of colliers suffered delay in Quebec harbor. Coal would have been delivered at Quebec to supply the local market had the Louise Basin not been blocked with ice. The local authorities apparently made no attempt to facilitate matters for the large colliers, although it is obviously their duty to aid in every possible way.

The Dominion Coal Company is making an earnest attempt to take advantage of the early opening of navigation. Throughout the past winter an enormous quantity of coal has been banked at Glace Bay. Sixteen colliers are in their employ, and in the third week of April coal to the amount of 60,000 tons was on its way up the St. Lawrence. It is hoped that 1,300,000 tons will be carried to Montreal before navigation closes. Much depends upon an early start. Last year's shortage should not occur again.

It is quite evident that the Nova Scotian collieries are anxious and willing to rush deliveries. In this they should be assisted.

ROSSLAND.

News from Rossland gives continued hope that mining in the South Belt will develop into a substantial mining camp. Much of the ore so far encountered is rich. The auriferous lead-silver ore, of which light shipments have been made from several prospects, is reported to range from \$30 to \$70 per ton. Prospectors are actively taking up areas and many properties are being worked on lease.

It were mischievous to speculate as to the results of development. But the facts themselves are sufficiently encouraging.

ZINC.

The opening of the Canada Zinc Company's smelter at Nelson, B.C., will have a doubly beneficial effect upon the Slocan lead mines. Heretofore the lead smelters have penalized the zinc contents of ore. Now the zinc ores of the district will be provided with a ready market and zinc contents of the lead ores will no longer be considered detrimental.

COBALT—PRESENT AND FUTURE.

A year ago the atmosphere of Cobalt was filled with the fever (and ague) of perilous promotions. To-day Cobalt is a strenuous mining camp, working out its own salvation with quiet confidence.

By the great majority of those directly interested in Cobalt a boom in stocks is not desired. The recent brisk movements, excited by several spectacular discoveries, may or may not assume boom dimensions. If they do, then Cobalt will have another load added to a sufficiently sizable burden of capitalization. We sincerely hope that neither by manipulation nor by the ungoverned enthusiasm of a gambling public, Cobalt stocks will move heavenward. They are now resting on much solid ground than ever before. Artificial inflation means catastrophic collapse.

Public attention has been caught and held by recent rich discoveries. These are phenomena that will probably recur from time to time. There are and always will be persons anxious to take advantage of the excitement of the moment to unload worthless paper. The Canadian public should need no warning. But there is another aspect of Cobalt. A few weeks ago a meeting of the Cobalt Branch of the Canadian Mining Institute was held. About fifty mine managers, engineers, mill men and other practical workers attended and took part in the proceedings. The object of the meeting was to discuss concentration methods. In itself this is a significant fact. It marks the strongly progressive tone of the camp. Superintendents, who not many months ago were in charge of one or two holes in the ground, must now attack the knotty questions of ore-dressing. Amongst these operators the most general topics of conversation are not the merits of stocks, but the comparative efficiency of different makes of air drills, crushers, rolls, concentrating tables and all matters pertaining to the mining and treatment of ore.

The skill and care of the mine managers of Cobalt have imparted real value to shares in many of the older companies. The list of shipping mines is constantly being added to, and Cobalt is giving us performance in place of promise.

The future of Cobalt lies largely in the hands of technical men. The camp is assured a fair lifetime, even from present developments. But the intelligent application of technical experience in the selection of suitable mining and concentrating equipment, and in the economical generation of power, will prolong indefinitely the productive future of the district.

It is imperative that mine managers should keep thoroughly informed concerning improvements and changes in methods and machinery. The insufficiently posted manager is painfully apt to develop costly fads. To a few, complicated machinery appeals because it is complicated. Often the personal predilections of a member of the directorate carry more weight than the