

feeling of apprehension that exists in the Kootenay lest legislation in labor matters might presently further injure the mining interests of that district. The British Columbia Act of 1900, shortening the hours of a day's labor did immense harm from which the province has not yet recovered. Today, the effort is being made by the working miners to secure compulsory arbitration in mining disputes. To consent to this, or to frame a law in its favor, would, our informant contends, handicap the mine owners most unjustly, because, among other reasons, the owner's investment is permanent in the soil, and his expenses heavy, whereas the miner, who is none too numerous, can pack his valise and go over to Montana if he is dissatisfied. It behooves the Dominion Government, in framing a law for the adjustment of labor disputes, to have regard to the views of the mining interest. Conditions in the far west of British Columbia or even in the West of Ontario, are very different from those prevailing in portions of Canada further East. And therefore, regulations that might seem fair to us here might be far from equitable if put in force in the Kootenay. A letter from Rossland, dated 8th July, represents the mining business there as in a condition almost the reverse of buoyant.

DEATH AMONG FIREMEN.

The killing of five members of the Toronto Fire Brigade last week by the collapse of a wall has moved the community strongly. Hardly a greater proof could be found of the sympathetic interest taken by citizens in the death of these men than the unprecedented number of persons who either took part in the mile-long funeral procession or lined the streets to see it pass. The men had perished in the discharge of duty, and the hearts of poor and rich alike thrill to the thought that such are the true heroes. It is significant, too, of the sympathy of property-owners and business men with those whose calling as firemen exposes them to so much risk, that various responsible bodies have taken steps to see to the protection of their families.

The Board of Trade has appointed a committee to enquire into the circumstances of the bereaved families with a view to having additions made to their resources if they are found to be left badly off. The Toronto Board of Fire Underwriters has decided to start a fund for the benefit of the bereaved families. Either the association will vote a lump sum and assess the companies, or each company will subscribe to a fund for the purpose. And last, the City Council are about debating the best method of supplementing the Firemen's Benefit Fund. One of the aldermen has given notice of a motion which will propose a special grant of \$5,000 to the family of each of the married men who lost their lives in last week's fire, and \$2,000 to the relatives of the single ones.

It is satisfactory to have the declaration of the Chief of the Brigade that he did not order the men into the position of exceptional risk in which they met their death, for he knew that the walls were unsafe. Nor does it appear who did order them. Possibly, with the reckless bravery characteristic of the firemen, they voluntarily took the risk, and paid for it with their lives.

OUR AUSTRALIAN LETTER.

Some moderate rains have fallen in the south half of Australia, which has improved the prospects of the portion of the country around us here, but Northern New South Wales, except the coast line, and the province of Queensland, are in a deplorable state. An effort has been made to induce the Federal Government to suspend the duties on fodder, but without success. The Southern States of the Australian Confederacy and the speculators here have some to sell and they were too strong for the suffering pastoralists. Prices are not lowered by the rainfall and are quoted:

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Manitoba flour, per ton	12	10	0	to	12	15	0
Oats, per bushel		3	3	to		3	5
Barley, per bushel		4	0	to		4	6
Peas, grey, per bushel		4	6	to		4	8
Peas, blue, per bushel		6	10	to		7	0
Potatoes, per ton	5	10	0	to	5	15	0
Butter, per lb.		1	5	to		1	6
Cheese per lb.			8	to			9
Bacon and ham, local, per lb.			9½	to			11

A little butter has come from Canada and more is expected. The sample received was pronounced very good after so long a voyage. Except flour, no effort is likely to be made to supply any other articles from Canada until after the next harvest, and then it may not be needed. But then it may be, and, if the drought continues, will be sorely needed and Canadian exporters should have their connections ready to take advantage of the opportunity. Just now the Argentine and the United States are shipping some corn here.

The tariff is still before the Senate, where it is likely to be for some time yet, though there are signs of impatience in both Parliament and the people that may hasten the end. It can only suggest changes and it has suggested a number of decreases, such as bacon, hams, butter, and cheese from three to two pence per lb.; flour and other meals from 2s. 6d. to 1s. 6d. per cential; wheat from 1s. 6d. to be free; canned fruits, etc., pints, 1s. 6d. per doz. to 15 per cent. It is likely to suggest important reductions in several lines of manufactures.

The Government has introduced a bill for granting bonuses to encourage the production of iron and steel. It is very much on the Canadian lines of dealing with that sort of thing. It is meeting with a stiff opposition, first from Free Traders, who oppose it from principle, and from the Labor Party, which wants the industry nationalized, and hopes for the establishment of blast furnaces, steel works, etc. by the Government.

The Federal Union of the Chamber of Commerce met in Sydney last week. The only noteworthy items were some paragraphs in the speech of the chairman, the Hon. Robert Reid, of Melbourne. He is a pronounced free trader, as most members of the Australian Chamber of Commerce are, but he now appears to have an open mind on preferential trade, and his views appeared not to have met with the signs of hostility that once would have greeted it. The cause is not far to seek. Once Australia's exports were largely confined to wool and metals, which the Continent took in large quantities, but now she is going into wheat, meat and dairy products, which are almost wholly sold in England. Then the South African war, which has given broader views and wider interest in Imperial matters, has had a good deal to do with the change. When patriotism and pocket are in harmony, they can effect great changes. The other item was his advocacy of nationalizing the cables of the British Empire. Sir Sandford Fleming's idea is slowly being supported in this country.

Until lately the Canadian cotton business with Australia has been conducted with such excellent business methods that not a complaint was heard, but there has been a change and law suits are threatened from sundry quarters. The story told on the street is in one case that a Canadian mill sent samples of a considerable quantity of prints it wished to sell. A cable was sent by its agent making a certain offer. The mill replied: "Sell if you can't do better." The