

the mine will pay dividends, and the proportion of that which should be working capital. Here again we discover a fruitful source of loss to investors. Now the ideal mining prospectus should be such that its conclusions should be self evident to the ordinary commercial intelligence such as the investor, or those who advise him, may be supposed to possess. He certainly requires a guarantee that the original facts are correctly stated. For that guarantee he looks to the character of the promoters and the name of the engineers they have employed. If any test, such as suggested by Mr. Kendall, could be applied it would be highly beneficial, but it is gravely to be doubted whether it could be successfully applied or not. There is a class of men known as mining experts, as opposed to mining engineers, who profess to pass judgment upon all three factors in successful mining enterprise we have outlined and to do so authoritatively. Naturally they are an excessively dangerous class of persons to have anything to do with. But there is such a strong tendency among human beings to depend upon authority instead of upon their own judgment that mining experts have received quite a vogue, and many a company has been promoted upon the unsupported fiat of one of these gentlemen. As an interesting commentary upon the condition of the profession of mining engineering in Great Britain, Mr. Hess of the *Critic* proposes to bring out a Black Book of engineers as a companion work to his most useful Directory of Guinea Pigs. This, indeed, may have the effect of the killing of some bogus engineers, but it will not touch the process by which they are evolved. However, as a fruitful field for his exertions the mining history of British Columbia during the last ten years may be recommended to Mr. Hess.

At the present time there is a tendency in some quarters to believe that the outbreak of hostilities threatened between the American Smelting and Refining company and the lead producers of the United States may result in some advantage to the silver-lead mines of British Columbia. The American Smelting and Refining company has been paying 4 cents and latterly 3.90 with a bonus on restricted production to the American mine owners. It now proposes to drop to 3.50 or 3.40 cents. There is talk of the mine owners in the Cœur d'Alene district combining to smelt, refine, and market their ore themselves in competition with the trust, and the theory is that this would send the trust to Mexico and British Columbia in search of ore. If this took place the benefit derived by the British Columbia mines would be of a most temporary character, for such internal competition breaking out in the United States would, immediately it became operative, send the price of lead in the United States down to the European level plus the duty. It might even send it lower, although the effect of such a movement as that would be speedily remedied by exportations. However, the British Columbia mines would not be benefitted for any length of

time, if at all. In fact it is a little difficult to appreciate how producers could be permanently benefitted by any competition stimulating production when more of the commodity was already being produced than the market could absorb. Of course, if the price offered for lead ore by the Smelting and Refining company fell so low that the Cœur d'Alene mines could not for the time being live under it and were closed down, that would relieve the market, and be of advantage to those British Columbia mines which carry a higher grade of ore. But it is questionable if the large producers in the Province are of much higher grade than the Idaho mines.

Our mines are apparently not in a position to take the best possible advantage of the open market which at present exists, not to mention the Canadian home market. The British Columbia lead miner receives about 1.50 cents for 90 per cent. of the lead in his ore. The consumer or exporter buying in Great Britain pays, even at present prices, 2.50 cents for the lead. At least \$25 a ton is absorbed by foreign industry out of every ton of lead produced in this Province. Let Canadian industry capture that sum of \$25 a ton and share it with the Canadian miner, and then it will be time enough to look for favours from the American Smelting and Refining company. We send lead bullion to San Francisco refiners who sell it to English brokers who export it to Montreal consumers. The Montreal importer pays \$25 a ton more for the lead he uses than the British Columbia miner receives for the lead he produces. Our industry will never be placed on a secure basis until we seek the available markets ourselves directly and make the most of them instead of being, as we are at present, a mere makeshift for the industry of the United States when it happens to require an increased supply of raw material.

Up to the end of the month of September the Dominion Iron and Steel company, of Sydney, N. S., had already marketed 42,000 tons of pig iron this year. 25,000 tons were exported to Great Britain, 15,000 tons sold in Canada and 2,000 tons sent to the United States.

The total consumption of pig iron in Canada during 1900 was 167,169 tons of which 65,330 tons were imported, 67,221 tons manufactured in Canada from foreign ores, and only 34,618 manufactured from Canadian ores in Canadian blast furnaces. It is obvious from the above figures that a great and beneficial change is taking place in this industry, and that Canada is destined to become a country capable not merely of producing sufficient iron and steel to supply the home market, but also of establishing an important export trade. The active works in Canada in 1901 are (1) The Nova Scotia Steel company; blast furnace at Ferrona, Nova Scotia; (2) The Hamilton Steel and Iron company, Hamilton; (3) The Canada Iron Furnace company, Midland; (4) The Dominion Iron and Steel company; furnaces at Sydney; (5) The Canada Iron Furnace company, Radnor; (7) The Drummondville furnaces. In addition to these the Lake Superior Power company are build-