

Rossland Weekly Miner.

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THE REAL ISSUE.

The public press and the politicians are drifting somewhat from the real issue at stake in connection with the East Kootenay scandal.

Attempts have been made to juggle with the people's rights to the extent of over 600,000 acres of land in the south-east corner of the province. These attempts have been futile because of the exposure that was made in time to prevent the land from being alienated.

While all this rascality was in progress, a large number of bona fide prospectors, acting under the best legal advice obtainable, proceeded to locate coal and petroleum claims. They conformed with all the requirements of the law and applied for licenses to proceed with prospecting and development work.

The crux of the situation lies in the fact that these licenses have not been issued. Because they have not been issued, the government makes the claim of the C. P. R. to the land stronger than it otherwise would be.

If the press and the legislature really desire to see the tangle straightened out quickly, effectively and satisfactorily, unremitting efforts should be directed towards compelling the government to issue licenses to those who have complied with all the requirements of the law.

THE PERSIAN QUESTION.

Those who have followed the course of events abroad have been aware for some time that there is a "Persian question" which must be taken into account in any broad view of the greater Eastern question which has at times of late seemed to be pressing for solution.

The publication of this report at Washington came almost simultaneously with an important announcement by Lord Lansdowne, the British foreign secretary, in the house of lords, of the policy of Great Britain in relation to the Persian gulf.

that the gulf was now open to the commerce of the world, and because the protection of the sea route to India necessitated British predominance in the gulf. Continuing, he said: "I declare without hesitation that we should regard the establishment of a naval base or a fortified port in the Persian gulf by any other power as a very grave menace to British interests, and we should certainly resist it with all the means at our disposal."

SUCCESS OF THE IRISH LAND BILL.

The Irish land bill has passed a second reading in the house of commons. The vote was almost unanimous. No measure of equal importance ever before encountered such good fortune. The debate over it occupied nearly two days.

The chief objection to the bill in its present form affects the tenants evicted from their farms for non-payment of rents during the period of coercion antedating the framing of the bill.

The passage of the land bill promises great things for the people on both sides of the Irish channel. It will put an end to the feud of a century, and place England and Ireland on a footing of amity, the like of which has not been experienced by them since the signing of the act of union.

IMPORTING COAL TO B. C.

The importation by the C. P. R. of 10,000 tons of coal from Japan to Victoria for use on the Empress steamers, is a striking commentary on the coal situation in British Columbia.

The strangest feature of the whole thing is that the present government blindly refuses to use this as an object lesson in its policy with regard to the coal measures of the Kootenays.

EASTERN OPINION RE THE SCANDAL.

The Miner herewith reproduces the opinion of the Montreal Star concerning the East Kootenay scandal. It is a fair sample of Eastern Canadian sentiment:

"The trail of corruption can be traced far and near. In British Columbia light has been thrown upon a scheme lately on foot by which, had it been carried out, the province would have handed over to a railway by way of subsidy 625,000 acres of land rich in oil and coal in lieu of a somewhat larger area of lands of much less value.

FOREST FIRES.

The Kootenays have suffered severely from forest fires. Millions of feet of magnificent timber have been destroyed in this manner in the last decade. Wasteful as are the lumbering operations conducted in this part of the country, where a superabundance of material induces careless methods and a disregard for the economies practiced in older provinces in the lumber industry, no one can look upon the destruction by fire of the Kootenays' magnificent forests of giant fir and cedar without a feeling of regret and a sense of loss.

The season of the year has arrived when the danger from forest fires threatens. Until the autumn and winter rains set in this danger will be constant and more vigilance should be exercised this year than last in order to guard against the recurrence of widespread conflagrations that befell the district last autumn.

THE LANSDOWNE DOCTRINE.

The Brooklyn Eagle says that Lord Lansdowne's declaration that Great Britain would resist the attempt of any other power to establish a fortified port or a naval base upon the Persian gulf is the strongest note struck in British foreign policy since Beaconsfield ordered Russia away from Constantinople twenty-five years ago.

OH! CRUEL MR. BICKERDIKE.

Mr. Bickerdike's bill to prohibit the importation, manufacture, or sale of cigarettes is now before parliament and the country, and it is difficult to imagine how a man of Mr. Bickerdike's mild and benevolent disposition could have devised such a cruel and inhuman punishment for the cigarette manufacturers.

The bill prohibits any person to manufacture, sell, keep or give away any cigarette or cigarette papers.

Obviously any manufacturer who finds himself with a few millions of cigarettes in his possession on the day the act comes into force, will have to smoke the whole stock himself, papers and all. He may not sell them! He may not give them away! He may not even keep them!

Absolutely the only thing that can be done with a cigarette, legally, under the Bickerdike Act, is to smoke it. There may be poetic justice though in this idea of making every manufacturer of smokes his own smoke-consumer.

AS TO SPELLING REFORM.

There is a new outbreak of spelling reform. Earnest persons are writing to the newspapers about it, and some newspapers are trying to begin at home and reform their own spelling, according to the artificial rules of the learned societies. It is the old story. We are to begin with simplifying the twelve large and hard words.

THE VICTORIAN STRIKE.

A Melbourne dispatch states that the engineers on the Victoria colony railways have concluded to go back to work because the drastic measure introduced in the legislature was sure to become law. The provisions of the bill are undoubtedly severe, but they follow logically on the government's view that the employees of the state railways are on the same foot as other civil servants and must be under government authority alone.

OUR FUTURE.

Great is Rossland. The future of the camp is assured beyond all question. The mines here have experienced the ups and downs of popular approval, but the fact remains that the bodies of payable ore are of a permanent nature. The veins have been proved as increasing in width with depth.

While the veins show an increase of width with depth, they do not, however, show a very great increase in value to the tonnage. It is scarcely reasonable that they should under the circumstances. But there is an immense amount of gratification to be obtained from the established fact that between walls there is no falling off in values.

ments has not been fashionable lately. The camp had its incipient boom, and butterfly experts, alleged or otherwise, hustled off to Mexico, Oregon, Idaho, Arizona, West Africa and Egypt. For the last year or so we have been drifting in the financial doldrums—partly because of the condition of the world's money market, partly because of labor troubles, partly because of over-capitalization and wild-catting, but chiefly because development requires time, and the fickle public grew impatient of delay of big dividends.

Aside from the fact that the tonnage of available shipping ore has not diminished—it has materially increased—a new era of industrial activity has been born and will soon become a demonstrated reality. Concentration is the watchword. By concentration we shall have another Butte, a rival to Johannesburg. By one process or another, the several companies actively engaged in mining in this camp are preparing to attack the enormous tonnage of developed ore that has remained so long untouched.

Meanwhile everything is working smoothly. The Le Roi people continue the development of their low workings with signal success. The rich ore on the 1050-foot level is reported as holding out in a highly gratifying manner, and it is rumored that the exploration of the diamond drill on the 1500-foot level has been by no means abortive.

Unfortunately, the question in a party-ridden country like Canada is not what legislation is desirable, but what legislation the opposite party will allow to pass without converting it into a weapon of attack upon the government. The crisis which is now supervening in Canada, in common with the United States, is so grave, however, that the plain duty of the leaders on both sides of politics is to confer as to what is needed without any consideration, however remote, of party interests.

Taking it all in all Rossland is absolutely all right. The condition of the camp was never better. There can be no doubt as to its future. An era of great industrial activity has commenced. It will continue to grow in extent until several thousand miners will soon be steadily employed.

THE B. C. AGENT-GENERAL.

The Colonial Mining News of London criticises The Miner for its expressed dissatisfaction as to the conduct of the British Columbia Agency in Great Britain. The News, however, does not attempt to justify the inertia and stupidity that is so palpably evident in the administration of the agent-general's office.

Meanwhile it behooves the News to rely on some other source than Mr. Turner for information as to whether The Miner is right or wrong.

The fact of the matter is (as we have had occasion to show more than once) that the present conduct of the agent-general's office is a public disgrace and a useless expense. British Columbia, despite its superior attractions, is getting scarcely any benefits from British immigration. If the office were operated upon an up-to-date and efficient basis, it should be directly instrumental in sending thousands of settlers and millions of dollars to British Columbia, but we have yet to hear of a man or a dollar having been induced to come here through the instrumentality of the present incumbent.

If Mr. Turner has to be pensioned let him be voted an annuity that will keep him in reasonable comfort, but do not permit him to continue to occupy a public position which he does not fill to advantage. B. C. needs British settlers and money, and would have both in abundance if a really active and competent man were acting as our agent-general.

THE QUESTION OF THE HOUR.

The Toronto News very strongly advocates the passage of a compulsory arbitration act, not a merely permissive one, such as Sir William Mulock is now standing sponsor for in parliament. It quotes the example of New Zealand, which it holds we might quite safely follow. If it could be shown that a compulsory arbitration act would have the same effect in Canada as the New Zealand secretary of labor states in his last report that it has had in that colony, votes for it, we may assume, would not be hard to obtain in certain quarters.

But if the fact argues them to a clearer even than Canada must remain United States if true. If, for example, steel industry of help of Canada Andrew's Pittsburgh have without Andrew seriously help Cape Breton within the ring of petition?

Any political party that in these days sets itself to angle for the labor vote, or for any special vote whatever, is acting treasonably to the country.

A Stockholm dispatch says that preparations are in progress to set before the world the full story of Russian aggression and brutality in Finland. It is proposed to secure publication of this story in every civilized country and to induce the great organs of public opinion to record their verdict upon the facts. While it is scarcely hoped that the result will be the restoration of Finnish liberties, it is thought that the protest of civilization will reach the czar and lead to at least some moderation of the present policy which is destroying the ancient laws and culture of Finland.

GET-RICH.

Good times are operations of the because it is the profits are more because there a surplus capital many have come the only victims men whose only thing for nothing reason for sympathy result in the meaning people and they present of people who own occupations tails of business.

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