

lands by alien speculators, such action would have received no criticism but very likely have been applauded. But no such Act was passed, and the question remains whether the country is justified in now ignoring obligations which by a recognized ethical standard could not positively be disregarded by honourable men in private life in their dealings with one another. If between individuals a contract is entered into, and one of the parties subsequently discovers that he has made a foolish bargain, would he be less bound to the performance of his part of the agreement? We deplore as much as anyone the possibility of these valuable coal areas passing into the hands of alien speculators, but why particularize in this special instance. Is this not the system we have long adopted? Is nationality or calling a bar to acquisition of and speculation in agricultural or mineral lands, or for that matter, coal lands in other sections of the Province? True there are special circumstances to be considered in the present case. It is vitally important that the undeveloped coal areas in East Kootenay should be worked in order to create healthy conditions of competition in respect to Kootenay fuel supply and to avoid the evils which are already apparent from the enjoyment by one corporation of a monopoly in those fields. This, we admit, would be a strong argument, if there were room for argument in the matter; but even as things stand, it may afford those who advocate the non-removal of the reservation, some consolation to remember, that the Lieutenant-Governor in council has power to enforce "restrictions, conditions and regulations" on those to whom licenses are granted, and further, past experience goes to prove that "Spokane speculators" played no inconsiderable part in promoting the development of and inducing investment in the metalliferous mines of Kootenay. As long as we have some reasonable assurance that the coal areas will be opened up—and if they are really valuable, they certainly won't be allowed to remain idle—does it really matter to the Province as a whole, into whose hands they pass in the first instance?

The reported rich discovery of gold quartz on Poplar Creek in the Lardo-Duncan, some forty miles distant from Kaslo, has occasioned the greatest possible excitement and interest, and has resulted in a rush to locate claims in that section. While, of course, it is impossible to form any conclusions from the mere fact that a small seam of phenomenally rich ore has been opened up on a single claim, there is every reason to hope that this section, which has long been known to be highly auriferous, will not prove disappointing. The opening up of new and rich gold areas in the Province at the present juncture would undoubtedly have a most stimulating effect on the industry as a whole, and we shall eagerly await further information and developments.

It is interesting to learn on the authority of Mr. John Stanton, the eminent copper statistician, who with other directors of the Granby Company, visited

the mines this month, that even should the price of the metal fall as low as seven cents per pound, operation of the Phoenix properties might still be profitably continued. Such a statement is most reassuring, and at the same time is a high encomium on the economic and efficient methods of mining and smelting there employed. Referring especially to this point Mr. Stanton remarked: "I have visited a great many mining camps during the past half century, and nowhere have I seen superior methods in vogue. I was not prepared to see such a state of affairs in existence outside of the United States. \* \* \* W. Yolen Williams, the mine manager, and A. B. W. Hodges, the smelter superintendent, have respectively solved the mining and metallurgical problems in an eminently satisfactory manner."

Mr. Stanton further added that higher results as regards tonnage per man per shift was obtained by the Granby company than by the Michigan mines.

In a report to the acting Minister of the Interior, dealing with the subject of the recent rock slide at Turtle Mountain, Messrs. McConnell and Brock, of the staff of the Geological Survey, after showing that to the solidity alone of a shoulder of the mountain running east from the north peak, the town of Frank was saved from entire annihilation, state that further danger is apprehended from the fissures which extend behind and further to the west of the north peak, as the breaking away of the central portion of the mountain is continuing; and it is suggested that these northern fissures should be closely watched, and the town evacuated on the first indication of slipping in of the fissures back of the face of the north peak. The report thus concludes: "The fracture zone, surrounding the old break is bound to fall away, but whether it falls away gradually and in comparatively harmless blocks, or in large destructive masses, depends upon future conditions which cannot be foretold. The town of Frank might possibly exist on its present site uninjured for ages, but there will always be the possibility of a second havoc-bringing slide. The fact that the threatening shoulder withstood the first slide is no proof that it is too solid to fall. The same conditions exist on the north peak and shoulder to-day as obtained on the central before it fell away. A succession of seasons with unusually heavy temperature, a slight earthquake shock, which is by no means an impossibility, or the closing of the chambers in the mine, after the coal has been drawn, perhaps after the inhabitants have lost all dread of the mountain, may give the impulse which would dislodge this mass and start it on a career of destruction." Since this possibility must always overhang the town, it would seem advisable to move it a short distance up the valley, beyond reach of danger.

In addition to the letters we print this month dealing with local smelting charges on lead ores, we have received several other communications from mine operators, which are either marked "confidential" or if not so marked contain information which is evi-