

The new Civil Service Commission should not neglect to consider at an early date the practicability of increasing the salaries of technical officers on the staff of the Ottawa Department of Mines. To advertise for experienced engineers, offering a salary of \$1,800, is a cruel farce.

In formal business phraseology the cable announce-

ment came on New Year's Day that the firm of Wernher, Beit & Co., had been dissolved by mutual consent. Wernher, Beit & Co. made history in South Africa. The firm made many millions there and put millions back. Mr. Otto Beit, the brother and heir of the famous Alfred Beit, is enormously wealthy. His former partner, Sir Julius Wernher, is also amply blessed with this world's goods.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### CONCERNING CONSERVATION.

#### Exhibit I.

#### "The Quip Quarrelsome."

Sir,—In your issue of December 1st I note an editorial entitled "An Indictment of Conservation." Inspired by the animus that you have consistently shown, you quote with tacit approval the ridiculous statements made by Mr. Stevens—statements that anyone with even a superficial knowledge of mines and mining, knows to be absolutely false. For example, Mr. Stevens states—and receives the stamp of editorial approval—that "in a single county of Michigan there 'is more iron ore than any 'professional conservation-ist' has estimated to exist in the whole world." I have no conservation data for the whole world; but, in the report of the United States National Conservation Commission, I find the supplies of iron ore in the United States estimated at 4,785 million tons—say four and three-quarter billion tons! The International Geological Congress, 1910, estimated the available iron ore resources of the world at 22,408 million tons, say, and of the whole state—not a county—of Michigan at 285 million tons. Does Mr. Stevens? Does anybody with any regard for a reputation for accuracy and veracity, mean to say that a single county in Michigan contains four and three-quarter billion tons of iron ore, much less, twenty-two and a half billion?

So far as his statements concerning the Guggenheim investments are concerned, if they have in the Bonanza mine a "sort of copper-plated gold brick," it is due to their having been misled by their own engineers. It is a somewhat novel proposition that, because, according to the erratic Mr. Stevens, they have made a losing investment in copper, they should be allowed to recoup themselves by taking up large areas of coal lands in defiance of the law! He further says that they are compelled to import "inferior" coal from British Columbia. The best information that I have is that Vancouver Island coal is of as good a quality as the Alaska coal and that much of the so-called, high grade Alaska coal should be "mined with a spoon." The editor of the CANADIAN MINING JOURNAL would be better employed if he endeavoured to get some reliable data to controvert aspersions upon one of our most important mineral resources instead of giving them a quasi confirmation. If Stevens et al would devote their attention to getting proper mining laws for Alaska instead of wild and untruthful denunciations of all and sundry, they would, at one and the same time, achieve something material and raise themselves in the estimation of all right thinking persons.

As for the statement that Alaskans are compelled to "pay double or triple" the price for fuel that they would pay if the Alaskan coal beds were developed, it is absolutely the reverse of correct, either in substance or in detail.

Respecting his assertion that the Washoe smelter may be shut down to save some trees in the federal forest reserves that are only fit for tepee poles, I have the word of the Chief Forester of the United States that the fumes have destroyed "forty million feet of merchantable timber," and that all that is needed is the installation of special appliances to eliminate poisonous fumes from the smoke.

When a man calls conservationists "political economists of the Stone Age and first cousins in mental capacity, to the Troglodytes"; when he raves that "the most odious forms of despotism" are being imposed upon miners in the Western States; that the conservation movement is a "cleverly devised scheme" to fix upon the necks of Americans "the 'iron collars of serfdom'; that Americans are suffering from "an extensive system of paid spies, an organized clique," etc., ad nauseam, it is charitable to assume that he is intoxicated with his own verbosity, particularly when his statements are so grossly inaccurate. It would be flattery to say of him, that he has constructed a number of very large edifices upon a knife edge breadth of fact.

But what shall be said of the editor who gives these astounding statements a quasi endorsement. The statement, by inference, that "many blunders and not a few political sins are being committed in the name of conservation," either says too little or too much. Does the editor of the CANADIAN MINING JOURNAL mean to say that "blunders" and "sins" are being committed in Canada in the "name of conservation?" If so, what are they? If not, why not specify the United States as the country to which he refers? Or, is this cunningly worded ambiguous sentence part of the campaign against the Conservation Commission initiated nearly two years ago at the instigation of a geologist in Ottawa whose political activities are not unknown and his alter ego in Toronto, both of whom are at present nameless but may not continue nameless very much longer.

In your issue of May 15th, 1909, you stated that "lumbermen, farmers and miners" were not represented on the Conservation Commission. You continued, "Are lumbermen, farmers and miners not to be trusted? Are they uniformly robbers and plunderers? Or are they ignorant children who forsooth, must be led by the hand?"

When this precious balderdash was penned, there were on the Commission, the following representatives of the lumbering, the agricultural and the mining interests: from each province, the Minister of that province charged with the administration of its forests, lands and mines, the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Mines and the Minister of the Interior for the Dominion; also five lumbermen, the late head of the famous Macdonald Agricultural College, a Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and the Dean of the only Forestry School in Canada, twenty in all! And the CANADIAN MINING