

qualified to deal with "this most important industry." It appears also, as if the competition was hardly a fair one, in that it is evident the successful competitor had access to official information that was not available to the public until after the date named for delivering the essays, and which constituted the chief feature of the prize essay. So far as the statistical tables and other official information included in this essay are concerned, they are of course not here subjected to criticism. Most of the information they give was shortly afterwards published as part of the official "Report of the Minister of Mines" for 1906. As to the remainder of the essay, we are of opinion it should have been rejected on account of the inaccuracy of many of its assertions, its faulty literary composition, the want of connection between statements of what are supposed to be the facts it sets forth, the sparseness of its information relative to the smelting industry, and the insufficiency of its practical suggestions. It is, we think, a pity the question of determining the merit of the essays on this particular subject was not left to judges well informed as to the accuracy or otherwise of their details. We will give three instances we could mention a dozen or more of what we have in mind in making this comment. In the prize essay, under the sub-head "Quesnel Division," it is stated that the Cariboo Gold Mining Company (even the name of the company is wrongly quoted) has at Bullion "ten miles of auriferous channel, a face over 350 ft. high, which has averaged 25 cents per cu. yd." Well, assuming that the value given is intended to be that of the gold-bearing gravel (not that of the channel or the face), we refer our readers to p. J 50 of the "Annual Report of the Minister of Mines" for 1905, where Mr. J. B. Hobson, the manager of the Consolidated Cariboo Hydraulic Mining Company, Limited, is quoted as reporting the results of hydraulic mining through seven successive seasons 1899-1905, which show an average value of gold recovered of rather under nine cents per cu. yd. of gravel washed. Again, under the sub-head "Omineca Division," it is stated that "anticipation of railway development has resulted in the location of diggings, said to be rich, on the Peace, Pine and Parsnip Rivers." No reliable information of the finding of gold in payable quantities on these rivers has come under our notice, neither have we met anyone who has any. Once more, the ore from the Brown Alaska Company's mine at Maple Bay is described as "a self-fluxing copper"; on the contrary, it is a highly silicious ore, containing chalcopyrite—an undesirable ore for smelting purposes where there is not plenty of iron to flux it. Numerous other inaccuracies might be pointed out, but it is not our present purpose to go farther into details. We only repeat, in conclusion, that we regret we cannot congratulate Mr. Flumerfelt on the result of his well-meant efforts; we think he has been decidedly unfortunate in this outcome of his public spiritedness so far as this particular subject is concerned.

GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE UNNECESSARY.

Smelter Managers Think Proposed Arbitration Useless.

THE COKE SHORTAGE DIFFICULTY has been solved and the general feeling is that no useful purpose can be served by proceeding with the proposed arbitration, consequently it is thought the Provincial Government will do well to refrain from going on with it. The Vancouver *News-Advertiser* (which, by the way, at once recognized that there was more behind the agitation of a few weeks ago against the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company than was permitted to be apparent to the general public, and so would not publish the highly coloured despatches sent out from Rossland by the C.P.R. Company's Associated Press organization) had gauged the situation fairly accurately when, on September 12, it published the following editorial comment:

"THE ALLEGED FUEL SHORTAGE.

"Some of the Provincial newspapers are urging the Provincial Government to take immediate steps to regulate the output of coal by the mines in the Crow's Nest Pass district and to impose such restrictions as may be thought desirable. In view of the improved conditions as regards labour and output which are reported, it would seem advisable for the Government to postpone action at the present time. The Government has the report of the deputy minister of mines on the result of his inquiry at the mines and smelters and will doubtless be guided by that. It is certainly not desirable to interfere with the ordinary course of trade without the fullest justification, and a month's delay in taking action will be better than interference by the Government, which may afterwards be found to have been unnecessary."

The temporary difficulty was in regard to the output of coke rather than coal; with this correction the foregoing view of the conditions and the accompanying advice to the Government were, as later experience showed, just what the occasion called for.

Reviewing the position away from the Trail-Rossland "storm centre" it is now evident that the agitation resulting from the "jumping" of district boards of trade and labour unions when the chief manipulators pulled the strings, was quite uncalled for. A canvass of the views of smelter managers showed that those representing the Boundary district smelters were practically of one mind—they had not asked for arbitration and were satisfied that not only was it unnecessary but no good would result from it that would not be gained by waiting a short time so as to allow of the shortage of labour at the coke ovens, and of railway cars carrying the coke to the smelters, being remedied. The general manager of the Le Roi Company, owning the Northport smelter, held similar views. The smaller smelters at Nelson and