

Rossland Weekly Miner.

Published Every Thursday by the ROSSLAND MINER PRINTING & PUBLISHING CO. LIMITED LIABILITY.

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EMANUEL KATZ, 25 Temple Court, New York

THE SUBSCRIPTION PRICE OF THE WEEKLY ROSSLAND MINER for all points in the United States and Canada is Two Dollars a year or One Dollar and Twenty-five Cents for six months; for all other countries Three Dollars a year—invariably in advance.

A MATTER OF SUPREME IMPORTANCE.

A matter which is of very much importance to this section of the province of British Columbia is one to which attention has just been called, namely, the danger of a complete monopoly of the coal and coke product of the Crow's Nest region being established unless immediate steps are taken by the Dominion government to thwart such a move.

But an important point in connection with this subject is that early in July next Mr. James J. Hill will have completed his road from Kalspell to Fernie, and will then be in a position to feed the smelters on the other side of the line. In order that interests in this section of the country should be immediately protected, no time should be lost in opening the reserve in the manner we have suggested, allowing the new company to commence work at the earliest possible opportunity in order to be in a position to compete with the Crow's Nest Coal Co., Mr. Hill and his system.

That a grave danger lies in delay, or in a refusal of the Dominion government to do what ought to be done in the matter, will be seen when it is realized that already the mining interests of this section have suffered because of the disposition on the part of the Crow's Nest Coal company to discriminate against them. It has been charged, and we believe charged with truth, that the coal company have supplied an inferior quantity of coke to the smelters in this section, sending to the smelters on the other side of the line, where they have competition, the best portion of the product.

The entire press of the province and our public men ought to take this matter up at once, and make it so clear to Mr. Sifton that there is only one duty for him to perform, that he will make no delay in meeting the wishes of the country in this respect.

That such a protest will go up we have no doubt whatever, but with the utterance of that protest should be coupled the demand that the one remedy which it is possible to put into effect to prevent the complete tying up in the hands of a gigantic monopoly of the mining industry of this country should be applied at once. The remedy immediately suggests itself. It is this—the Dominion government should release its coal reserve to some company who will exploit it and work in harmony and sympathy with the Canadian Pacific Railway company. Just here, we may explain that unfortunately the Canadian Pacific Railway company is debarred from being an applicant for the privilege of working the reserve we have mentioned. This is due to the fact that it entered into an agreement with the Crow's Nest Coal company not to engage in the coal mining industry for a period of time in that district, but there is nothing to prevent a company being formed which would immediately commence the exploitation of that reserve, and act in sympathy and co-operate with the Canadian Pacific Railway company for the distribution of its product. We mention as an essential feature of any arrangement which may be made with the Dominion government that the reserve should be

opened up by some company which will work in conjunction with the C. P. R., for the reason that it is absolutely necessary that the company with facilities for handling the product and reaching the mining districts should co-operate with the coal company in order to secure to the mining interests of this section the guarantee that they will have the same competitive facilities as will be given smelters on the other side of the line by the Crow's Nest Coal company and Jim Hill's railway.

Mr. Sifton, who presides over the department which will have the authority to dispose either one way or another of the 50,000 acres of coal lands which have been reserved south of Morrissey, will make no mistake if he immediately consents to the arrangement which will meet with the approval of every man in Western Canada who is free from Crow's Nest Coal company influence; and we do not think that he will display much hesitancy in the matter.

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IMPORTANCE OF THE CIVIC CONTEST.

The municipal contest which the electors of Rossland will deal with on Thursday next is the most important one since the city was incorporated. The future of the place, the success or failure of its citizens, depends to an almost incalculable extent upon the result. We make that statement with a due appreciation of the gravity of its import. Let us first inquire what is the main issue. Are we not stating the case quite accurately when we say that it is to decide whether rampant and insolent unionism is to be paramount, with its never failing sequence of distrust, disturbance and shattering of confidence engendered in the community, or whether our business affairs are to be conducted along sane lines and a guarantee given that peace and harmony and quietude shall prevail? We think so. In support of that contention let us inquire who are those who compose the rank and file of the Municipal Labor League, and what is the incentive of that organization to attempt to capture the control of the city government. Let us go back a little. We are all of us familiar with the incidents which led up to the deplorable strike which was commenced in July last and which has now, fortunately, been fought to a successful finish by the opponents of tyranny. Are we not stating the bald truth when we say that that strike was engineered by the very men who are now attempting, under the style and title of the Municipal Labor League, to capture the control of the city government? We think so. Let us next inquire what is the incentive to such an aspiration on the part of such men? What is their idea? What are they after? Are they desirous of attending to the city's welfare in such a manner that all its citizens may prosper? Are they desirous that we

should have a period of peace and quietude after the turmoil and disaster with which we have contended? No, is our answer; and that answer will find an echo in the breast of every man who reads these lines. What is it, then, that they desire? The answer is easy. They desire—and they know it in their hearts—to have such power placed in their hands in connection with the management of the municipal government as to bolster up the cause of tyrannical and noxious unionism, terrorize the mine managers and the host of mine employees who manfully refuse to affiliate with such a shoddy crowd, boycott all who have shown themselves to be out of sympathy with them, and—to use a western phrase—raise hell generally. That is the simple truth of the matter.

Now, supposing such a body of presumptuous and insolent demagogues and incompetents succeeded in their scheme. What would be the consequence? It seems almost superfluous to ask the question. Everybody in the community knows what it would be. It would mean disaster for Rossland. That's all—disaster complete and effective. Why? Because confidence in the stability of the city would be completely shattered. Could the city obtain money from financial houses on its debentures? No! An application would be immediately met with the curt retort: "Oh, we have no confidence in Rossland. You are in the grasp of a few blatant tyrants who may create trouble at any time. We do not desire to become interested in your city." Could our merchants, our storekeepers, get any extensive credit? No; wholesalers would know that Rossland would be a pretty good place to keep clear of, if there was no guarantee of a continuation of permanent conditions. And thus Rossland would be brought practically to the verge of ruin. We make that latter statement in all seriousness. This is no time for indulging in extravagant utterances. But while we are thus deeply impressed with the importance of the question which the electors of Rossland will decide on Thursday next, we have no doubt as to what the outcome will be. The Municipal Labor League and its candidates will be overwhelmingly defeated. Opposed to them and their aspirations are men who stand as the choice of a great body of citizens who have the true and best interests of the town at heart—men who have large stakes in the community; men who realize what a tremendous danger exists in the possibility of the supremacy of an element whose watchword is "Revenge."

The selection made by the Citizens' Committee of candidates for the majority and aldermanic seats is a wise one. Mr. John Stillwell Clute is a man who will fill the important position to which he will be elevated with honor and ability. He is one of the pioneers of the camp; he has had experience in directing our municipal affairs and can be depended upon to serve the electors faithfully and well. He will be elected, as will his associates for the position of aldermen on the Citizens' ticket. But it should be by overwhelming majorities. To that end every man who cares for the protection of Rossland's future should bestir himself and see that every possible vote is polled in favor of the candidates whose installation in office will guarantee us peace, progress and prosperity.

The rumors of a third candidate entering the field to contest the mayoralty are believed to be without foundation. They ought to be. Any citizen who would inject himself into this contest at this hour would be showing a woful lack of patriotism—and we do not believe it will be done. But in any event Mr. Clute's election is assured.

LEAD, COPPER AND ZINC

The census bureau of the Washington government has just issued a report on the smelting and refining of lead, copper and zinc, which shows a capital of \$139,354,138 invested in the 117 establishments in the United States. This sum represents the value of land, buildings, machinery, tools and implements and the live capital utilized, but does not include the capital stock of any of the corporations. The value of the products is returned as \$338,786,742, to produce which involves an outlay of \$2,450,080 for the salaries of officials, clerks, etc.; \$15,973,626 for wages paid; \$3,088,007 for

miscellaneous expenses, including rent, taxes, etc.; and \$279,655,350 for materials used, mill supplies, freight and fuel. The report says that notwithstanding the absence of data for former censuses that can be used as a basis of comparison, it can be stated with certainty that the three branches of the industry have kept pace with the general growth of manufacturing industries. Especially is this the case in copper smelting and refining, which has made remarkable progress, due largely to the increased use of the metal in the electrical industry and the discovery of new sources of ore. The lead industry has also made great progress during the past decade, the lead product for 1899 amounting to 182,967 short tons of refined lead as compared with 293,965 short tons in 1890, an increase of 110,998 short tons or 60.7 per cent. The production of lead for the year 1899 was the largest in the history of the industry, with the exception of that in the previous year, 1898. The industry had an invested capital of \$72,148,933 in 1899, gave employment to 8,319 wage-earners and paid \$5,088,684 in wages, while its products were valued at \$175,469,304. The value of the gold and silver included in the \$175,469,304 amounted to \$130,205,325, or 74.2 per cent of the total.

The production of copper in the United States during the year 1899 was the largest in the history of the industry. The rapid increase in production dates from 1879, when the annual product amounted to 23,000 long tons. It increased to 101,230 long tons in 1889 and 206,016 long tons in 1899. Of the total capital (\$83,063,395) invested in copper smelting and refining, \$19,375,065, or 36.5 per cent, was invested in plants devoted exclusively to smelting; 12,166,962, or 22.9 per cent, in plants devoted to refining, and \$21,521,368, or 40.6 per cent, in those engaged in both branches of the industry.

No one doubts that the candidates who are named on the Citizens' ticket will be elected. They stand for sane business, law, order and efficiency in civic affairs; and when the vote on Thursday shall have been polled it will be seen that they represent a great majority of the people resident in this community.

MR. FRECHEVILLE AND THE STRIKE.

Mr. Frecheville, in his report on the result of his investigation into conditions in Rossland, on behalf of the Le Roi Mining Company, has this to say about the late strike: "The strike at Rossland is a sympathetic one ordered by the Western Federation of Miners, which has its headquarters at Denver, Colorado, the Rossland Miners' Union being a branch of that organization. The demand for an increase of 50 cents per day in the 'muckers' wages is simply a pretext. More muckers than are wanted can be got for \$2.50 per day, which now is and always has been the rate of pay for this class of labor in Rossland. The miners who receive \$3.50 per day have no grievances that I am aware of. As a matter of fact, the strike was, according to the by-laws of the union itself, illegally called. The battle having once begun has to be fought out if you wish to have control over the working of your property. Any concession, no matter how slight, to the demands of the union would be hailed as a victory, and would be followed by still further demands. The rank and file of the Rossland Miners' Union would now gladly call off the strike, but they are powerless to do so, being under the control of professional agitators, who in their turn are ruled by the orders of the Western Federation of Miners at Denver. As it is, your mine and smelting works are being filled up with non-union men; the smelting works have already got their full complement, and it will not be long before your mine will be in the same position. Naturally, at first many of the men were green hands, and work was carried on at a great disadvantage, but this condition of affairs is improving daily, incompetent men being weeded out and replaced by skilled miners."

THE CIVIC ELECTION.

In considering the approaching municipal contest there can be but one thought in the minds of those who have the best interests of this city and this section of country at heart—and that is to endeavor to wipe out forever the stigma that Rossland is a demagogue-ridden community. We may quibble about municipal finances and civic departmental affairs; but every elector of intelligence knows that there is only one issue in this contest which calls for any particular attention on his part—and that is: Shall our civic affairs be handed over to the control of the element which has been mainly responsible for the creation of industrial strife here in the past, or shall they be placed under the guidance and direction of men representing large property interests who wish Rossland to progress along sane, legitimate lines with peace and harmony prevailing in the community? The issue is a clear-cut one. No man of intelligence can doubt what it is. On the one hand we have a set of men who are avowedly opposed to conditions as they are at present. That is to say, the Municipal Labor League—in other words, the officials of the Miners' Union—do not relish the spectacle of hundreds of non-union miners being employed on "the hill," and are scheming, under the guise of the style and title of the Municipal Labor League, to secure such supremacy in Rossland's municipal affairs as may enable them to turn industrial peace as we have it at present into industrial war. That is the plain truth of the matter.

We think we are stating the case fairly accurately when we say that a large majority of the property owners and the bulk of those permanent residents who are sincerely desirous of seeing Rossland progress as a municipality, are anxious that matters may so eventuate at the approaching contest that it will be demonstrated that union tyranny is no longer paramount.

We have not one word to say against the laboring men. What we disagree with is the methods which their leaders elect to adopt in an endeavor to accomplish their ends. Nine-tenths of the honest laborers in the mines of this camp know that it would be best for everybody concerned if they were freed from the domination of a few men who pose as walking delegates and officials of an alien labor organization. What Rossland is attempting to accomplish as a result of the approaching election is the securing of a guarantee that hereafter there will be no question as to its ability to conduct its municipal affairs along strict business lines—free from the interference of blatant agitators who depend for a livelihood upon successful attempts to engender discontent in the minds of the laboring classes as to present conditions.

PAUL PRY AND THE "CLOSED DOORS."

Mr. Ferris complains of the treatment accorded to him when he obtruded himself into the meeting which was called for the express purpose of opposing the gang of agitators and trouble-makers. He was politely informed by the chairman that unless he was prepared to support the Citizens' Party in the approaching election he should retire from the meeting. Was there anything objectionable in this treatment? The only possible object which Mr. Ferris could have had in attending the meeting was to pry into the methods proposed to be adopted by his opponents. Would any such Paul Pry be tolerated in the meetings of that patriotic clique to which Mr. Ferris belongs and which calls itself the Independent Labor party? We rather think that rougher treatment than a polite request to retire would be accorded to any such individual.

CURRENT COMMENT

Mr. J. J. Hill's Game. The conspiracy which seems to be afoot, and in which the members of the Crow's Nest Pass Coal company and Mr. Jas. J. Hill, the president of the Great Northern Railway company, are the principal actors, for obtaining control of the coal and coke output of

East Kootenay in the interests of the smelting and refining industries to the south of the line, and to the detriment of those in our own country, is well indicated in the editorial of the Nelson Tribune which appeared in the Coast papers yesterday as a dispatch from that city. The concealed attempt on the part of these people to obtain from the government another grant of coal lands in that district, to obtain an absolute monopoly, so as to make the accessible coal lands of the Crow's Nest Pass, is not unlikely to be successful unless such a cry is raised throughout the province as will bring the matter strongly and intelligently before the attention of the government at Ottawa.

The leading members of the Crow's Nest Pass company are all prominent Liberals, and have in the past, and do now use their positions in the party for their own personal purposes. That it is their hope and ambition that they may be successful in this latest move is strengthened by the fact that they have the ear of the government, and it is not in any way questioning the government's good faith to the people and its desire to do right to say that it will require the best efforts, and as soon as the grant is obtained to render the attempt of these men abortive.

As the Tribune points out, coal mining can be carried on economically only at four points in the Crow's Nest Pass, namely, at Michel, at Coal Creek, at the mouth of Morrissey's Creek, and on land south of Morrissey. The company is already operating at Michel and Coal Creek, and will shortly begin operating north of Morrissey. Their present desire is to secure land south of Morrissey, in which event they would have an absolute monopoly of all the accessible coal lands of the Pass. The land south of Morrissey, however, is controlled by the Dominion government. The company, which is asking for land south of Morrissey, is one in which Mr. Hill and the Crow's Nest people have a controlling interest, and as soon as the grant is obtained it would of course be transferred to the company.

What the company is doing, therefore, is this: "It is trying to obtain the land for a so-called independent company, but a company really subsidiary to the Crow's Nest Pass company. Mr. Sifton will not allow himself to be over-reached in this bold fashion." "Consider what would happen," the Tribune says, "if Mr. Hill controlled the coal and coke supply in the Crow's Nest Pass. Naturally his efforts would be directed to getting up the cost of smelting on the American side below the lowest figure that could be quoted by Canadian smelters, inasmuch as fuel constitutes a very large item indeed in the cost of smelting. With cheaper smelting he would attract British Columbian ore to his smelters on the American side. In this manner it would be quite within his power to annihilate the smelting industry in British Columbia within a twelvemonth and to prevent its resurrection for all time. Mr. Sifton cannot but be aware of the plot which the Crow's Nest Coal company is digging for him, and for the interests of British Columbia as well. It has been suggested that the provincial government should be asked to interfere. Under the grant transferring the coal lands to the Crow's Nest Coal company it has the power to levy any royalty, say \$3 per ton, with the proviso that this royalty should not be imposed upon coal going to American smelters which do not smelt British Columbia ores. By this means Mr. Hill would be prevented from wresting nature's bounty to us out of our hands and converting it into a weapon for our destruction." The Tribune suggests, however, that the government of the Dominion ought to lease the coal lands to the Morrissey to some company in no way controlled or likely to be controlled by Mr. Hill and his friends.

Not once but frequently has the Province urged the absolute necessity in the interests of the province of preventing the Great Northern magnate from obtaining such a control of our natural resources, that he could employ his power to the advantage of the United States and to the destruction of our native industries. Neither in the upper country nor on the coast have these warnings been given the consideration they deserve. The people and the governments have phoo-phooed the idea that any danger could arise from this source. It appears now, however, that the danger has arisen in a very pronounced way, and to the endangerment of one of our greatest natural resources—our coal measures of East Kootenay.

But it is not East Kootenay alone that is in jeopardy. Mr. Hill has his attention fixed upon the great mining district of West Kootenay—the gold copper area of the Similkameen, where also valuable coal measures exist. It is his intention, if he can succeed in accomplishing his purpose of gaining control of this district through the operation of a line of railway possessing a practical monopoly of that country, to do exactly, with the industries of that country that he is attempting to do, as the Tribune points out, with the industrial development of the district immediately east. If the people of British Columbia do not awake and awake speedily to a realization of the danger which threatens them through the aggressiveness of this railway potentate and the disloyal intrigues of certain capitalists in Eastern Canada, and of an element in our own province, we will find before long that our richest resources have gone from us, that we have been robbed of that future which should naturally be ours, and that all the wealth and energy of our country has been diverted for the building up and enrichment of an alien people.—Vancouver Province.

IOWA POLITICIANS.

DES MOINES, Ia., Jan. 14.—Senator W. B. Allen was nominated tonight for the sixth consecutive term, and Senator Jonathan P. Dolliver was nominated to succeed himself at the expiration of his appointed term. The vote of the caucus was unanimous in both cases.

LONDON, Jan. 14.—The meeting of the J. meeting at St. James' was awaited with great interest because it was expected to be thrown upon the two Lord Rosser parties. Taken as a whole, the discussion was a most interesting one, and the appearance in person of Lord Rosser, Campbell-Bannerman, and the other members of the Liberal fold here, and in full accordance with the policy of the Liberal Unionists, the meeting was called to an adjournment. In the denouncing Lord Rosser to the party, the writer hopes that the gathering of Rosser's letter with mingled with the latter's preface, Lord Rosser's meeting would be of commensurate value to his recent speech.

FOLKESTONE. A coroner's jury of six, including the Hon. Richard B. Bannerman, was thrown from near here on Saturday.

BERLIN, Jan. 14.—The important question of the development of the our Fatherland, as declared by the present political situation, was discussed by the Reichstag.

NOTTINGHAM. Sampson's lace here, is probably damaged or over.

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