

and removable evils of which we do agree exist can be remedied, so that legitimate enterprises will have a fair chance to succeed, we shall have made a big stride towards bringing about prosperity to the Province. It will be the part of the Association to ascertain what are real evils and what are imaginary, to suggest remedies, to devise improvements, to reconcile conflicting interests, to advertise the resources of the country and generally to take such a stand in the community as will best serve the great interests we all have at heart.

The work that has been undertaken so far by a provisional executive committee is, of course, of an entirely preliminary character, and the Association will not be a properly constituted body until after the convention in February, when a constitution will be adopted and organization finally effected. It is, therefore, to be hoped that the general value and importance of the movement will be adequately recognized throughout the country, and that all sections and classes will enter into a friendly rivalry to send a large and representative body of delegates to the meeting. The present movement is not an original conception. Some twenty years ago conditions in the State of California were a great deal worse than they are in British Columbia to-day, and mining, especially that carried on by hydraulic methods, was practically at a standstill. In consequence, the California Miners' Association was formed, to whose efforts is directly traceable the prosperity which the mining industry in that State has since uninterruptedly enjoyed. Among the members of the California association are the Governor of the State, judges, professional men, merchants, farmers, teamsters, as well, of course, as mine operators and mine labourers; and that is what we want in British Columbia, the earnest co-operation of all classes for a work in which we are all vitally interested.

We have magnificent timber resources, the salmon fisheries are important, there is much land that may be turned to agricultural uses; but none of these industries will ever by themselves make British Columbia great and prosperous. It is to mining we look to do that. Once the mines begin to pay, as under normally favourable conditions they assuredly will, the confidence of capital will be revived, new fields will be opened up, and we shall have what we require most—settlement and population. Considering the drawbacks and difficulties, the obstacles that have had to be overcome, the engineering and metallurgical problems that have presented themselves at every turn, it is no less wonderful than satisfactory that the mining industry of the Province has progressed so far as it has. Remember that hardly a dozen years ago Kootenay was an unexplored waste, a wilderness of mountains and pine forests; that when the first mines were discovered it was no uncommon thing to pay

twenty and thirty dollars a ton transportation charges, and then after railways had been built, came one trouble after another, such as are to be expected in a new country situated as we are. The difficulty of securing efficient labour, the high cost of smelting, the ruinous cost of marketing, injudicious legislation, lack of capital, and last but not least the visitation of the fraudulent promoter.

We hope to see the new Association do much both to ameliorate existing conditions and prevent the occurrence of difficulties which should be avoidable. The Association for instance, cannot regulate the prices of metals, but it can assist in removing the burdens imposed on the industry by the Dominion Government in the form of heavy duties on mine supplies; it can bring about a better understanding between employers and employees to the avoidance of strikes; it can by proper suggestion, representing the majority view of those chiefly interested, prevent the introduction of injudicious legislation and see that the mining laws in future are framed in such a manner as to encourage not only the investment of capital in the Province, but to stimulate exploration and prospecting; it can, as the Miners' Association has done in California, compel the Government to increase the efficiency of the Mines Department; it can do much to advertise the great mineral resources of the country, and inspire confidence by discouraging "wild-catting" and dishonest promotion; in short, if now for once prejudice and apathy can be overcome, and capital and labour induced to join hands for the common good, we confidently assert that the new Association will be the means by which at no distant date British Columbia will become one of the most productive and most prosperous mineral areas on the American continent.



COKING AND NON COKING COALS.

THIS question is of such general interest that a few notes thereon should not be out of place.

The districts to which this article refers are, generally speaking, those valleys of the interior plateau of British Columbia where tertiary coal basins exist, such as the Similkameen and Tulameen Basins, Nicola Valley, White Lake, etc. But the following remarks would apply to any further discoveries of a similar class of coal. These small basins are probably all due to similar geological causes and are of approximately similar age, the cause being the filling of tertiary lake basins, or enlarged river valleys, by vegetable debris and the further growth of coal forming plants on the marshy land thus formed. Periods of uplift and depression alternated with, in some cases, the addition of beds of volcanic ash, either deposited directly in the lake from adjoining craters or brought down in floods from outlying centres of eruption.