

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## THE CANADIAN MINING INSTITUTE AND THE NORTHWEST.

The Editor,—Ill-health has prevented me from replying to the article in your issue for May, headed "The Canadian Mining Institute and the Northwest," until this late date. But as the article contains several inaccuracies and mis-statements, which I feel sure you will be anxious to correct, I venture, though tardily, to place at your disposal the facts of the case.

Your contention, as I take it, is that the rules under which the business of the Institute is at present conducted, do not sufficiently take into account Western interests; and in proof thereof you point out that at the last annual meeting held in the City of Quebec, the West had but one representative in attendance. You further state that the Institute, during "the eighteen years it has been in existence," has held, so far as you are aware, but one meeting of members in British Columbia, that intimation has not been given to Western mining journals in respect to the annual meetings, nor have accounts of the proceedings been handed to the press, and, finally, you complain that British Columbian members of the Council have practically no voice in conducting the business of the Institute, that it is seldom, if ever, the opinion of these gentlemen is sought, even on important matters, and that only members of the council present at its meetings are allowed to vote. Thus you, perhaps, pertinently enough, in the belief that your statements are correct, ask: "What practical benefit does the Province derive from having 70 or 80 of its mining and smelting men members of the Canadian Mining Institute, and what use has the Institute for the Province other than as a contributor to its revenues?" At the same time you might equally as well have put the same enquiry concerning any half dozen other technical organisations with a British Columbian membership.

Now, sir, if I may call your attention to the charter under which the Institute was incorporated by Act of Parliament, you will observe that the objects for which the society was organised, are fourfold, and that the holding of meetings is explained as being but one means by which one of those objects, may be best carried into effect. Without in any way desiring to discount the importance and interest to members of the annual meeting, it may easily be said that inability to attend by no means implies that a member thus fails to derive the full value of his annual subscription. He, of course, misses the benefit and opportunity of meeting his fellow members, engaged in the same pursuit as himself, but on the other hand, he receives in due course through the mails a report of the meeting, papers read thereat and the discussions thereon, and has the opportunity if he so desires of expressing his own opinions for publication on any of the topics introduced. As you

with just pride boast, British Columbia is a great contributor to the mineral wealth of the Dominion, but it is still the far West; just as the maritime provinces, which are also rich in coal and iron, are the far East. Hence, without regard to the relative importance of the provinces as mineral producing areas, but having regard to the question where is it possible to get together the most representative gathering of mining men? the consensus of opinion in past years has been that the annual meetings should be held in one of the large central cities of the Dominion.

Referring you again to the charter, you will find that the Institute was incorporated in the year 1898, and that it is not, therefore, eighteen years old but nine. Even you, sir, hard worker though you be, would consider the critic unfair, who, doubling your age, computed the sum of your endeavours inadequate where spread over the longer period. To my personal knowledge the late secretary of the Institute, Mr. B. T. A. Bell, visited British Columbia at least three or four times in the interests of British Columbian members, and a very successful summer meeting was held in British Columbia in 1899, and again three years later. So that instead of one meeting in eighteen years, there have been two meetings in less than nine years; while the project of holding a meeting in the Province next year, when the Institute will in all probability have a British Columbian president, has been informally discussed for some time past, by members of this year's executive. Equally incorrect is your assertion that the British Columbia members of the council have no voice in the conduct of the business of the Institute. Par. XXXII., Sec. VI. of our by-laws reads as follows: "At all meetings of the council five shall be a quorum for the transaction of business, and as soon as possible after each meeting copies of the minutes shall be sent to each member of the council. In the event of a majority of the whole council signifying to the secretary a wish to reconsider any act of a council meeting, this shall be done at the regular council meeting, and letter ballots shall be accepted from such members as are unable to be present, and a majority of votes shall decide the point at issue." But, I may add, since I was elected to the secretaryship of the Institute in March, I have, acting under the instructions of the council, submitted every important matter that has arisen, to the consideration of the whole council by letter, and requested a vote by letter ballot.

Your complaint that notices and reports have not been sent to Western newspapers is, however, not unreasonable, and there is no reason why such information should not be supplied in future. Probably it was not considered necessary to do so in the past, as all notices have been and still are, of course, sent direct to those chiefly interested, namely, the members of the Institute, wherever residing. It should not be necessary for me to add that there has been no intentional discrimination in this respect on the part of the Institute against the Western technical press, whose goodwill is earnestly desired.