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Dr. Alfred Stansfield's report on the possibilities of establishing an iron and steel industry in the Province of British Columbia is the most valuable contribution that has been made on this important subject. The Provincial Government is to be congratulated on having selected such an able metallurgist to investigate this problem for it, and Dr. Stansfield is to be congratulated on his illuminating and adequate treatment of the problem in so far as the material submitted to him admitted. The report, which is lengthy, the general summary and conclusion of which is presented on the front page of this issue, is worthy of keen and intense study by both the Dominion and Provincial Governments and the mining interests as well as the people of British Columbia in general.

Dr. Stansfield will, perhaps, be criticized for his failure to treat of the blast furnace process. It, perhaps, has not been called to his attention that there exists in limited quantities bog iron deposits and other hematite occurrences in the Province. It must, however, be stated that the information is so circumstantial and scant with regard to these deposits that little consideration could be given to them. The known existence of magnetite and the development that has taken place on claims where this ore occurs were the bases for him to disregard the blast furnace process and devote his attention to the electric furnace. The report is, on the whole, discouraging, and yet not without hope for a production of small capacity, which may yet lead to larger and more substantial operations.

Even by the establishment of the electric smelting process, Dr. Stansfield points out that, at the present cost of electric power, the cost of production would yield little profit, if any, but if a process can be worked out—and a process which he points the way for a beginning to be made in iron and steel production—being a process of powdering the iron ore and concentrating it by the electro-magnetic method, then the electric smelting process can be established under the present high price of electric power at a price which would enable it to compete in the provincial market against eastern and imported iron and steel.

We think it highly desirable that the way which Dr. Stansfield has shown should be tried out, with the assistance

The services of this journal are offered through an inquiry column, which is open to subscribers and the public generally without charge, for detailed information or opinion as to financial or industrial affairs or institutions throughout the Province of British Columbia. Wherever possible the replies to these inquiries will be made through this column. Where inquiries are not of general interest, they will be handled by letter. We think that we can assure our readers that the opinions expressed will be reliable and conservative, and that all statements will be as accurate as possible.

of both the Provincial and Dominion Governments, probably working through university or other experimental laboratories. The matter is very important and, we believe, should receive the immediate consideration of those capable of carrying on these experiments, so that as soon as possible some start may be made in this direction.

If the recent election in Vancouver is any indication of the way the wind blows, it will be very difficult for any municipal council to secure authority to borrow money and spend the proceeds on public improvements, at any rate until the financial situation has cleared, or the ratepayers feel they can stand an increased burden of taxation. The defeat of the money by-laws in Vancouver was emphatic, large majorities were registered against their approval. It is worthy of note that the ratepayers of Vancouver used discrimination in passing the transfer by-law, which involves authority to use money for another purpose than was previously approved. This involves simply a book-keeping entry and does not give authority to borrow money. It was feared that the overwhelming sentiment against borrowing further funds was such that this transfer, which was highly desirable, would be swept aside in the general condemnation.

The election points out two conclusions, either one of which, or both, might have led the ratepayers to vote against the money by-laws. The one consideration was probably that the ratepayer found that his taxes were sufficiently high and all that he chose to bear, and therefore he would countenance no increase to his municipal burden. This same consideration might also have actuated a large number of those who are not paying their taxes in the same way, that they did not wish to increase the burdens which they hope at some future date to discharge.

The other consideration may have been that the ratepayers who pay their taxes wished to register a protest against the defiance of the best interests of the city in refusing to hold a tax sale. These ratepayers probably argued to themselves that, since the last municipal council had proved so recreant in their duties to the financial interests of the city, they were not worthy to be entrusted with the custody of increased funds, which would involve a larger amount of scrutiny and management.