

Fraternal May Increase Rates

The Dominion Commercial Travellers' Mutual Benefit Society, Montreal, is faced with the necessity of raising its assessments, as the only alternative to remaining actuarially unsound. The society commenced business in Quebec Province in 1875, and operates under provincial license. The rate question was brought up at a quarterly meeting on December 6, and will be submitted at the annual meeting on January 17. As older members would be required to pay much higher rates to make up for the insurance they have been carrying too cheaply, considerable opposition is anticipated.

Prospects for Influenza

Reports from Australia indicate that a recrudescence of the influenza epidemic occurred during the recent winter (which synchronizes with our summer). There were from 1,200 to 1,500 cases as a daily hospital average in Victoria. The mortality in Melbourne was from 10 to 12 deaths daily. In Sydney, a severe outbreak occurred in June, the mortality assuming serious proportions for one or two weeks. With milder weather in mid-July, the outbreak rapidly subsided.

We, in Canada, are now sustaining a prolonged cold spell, hence the necessity for the public to bear in mind that there is the danger of a recurrence of the disease in Canada. Every individual should take precautions against infection. Keep the body warm and guard against sudden changes of temperature. Guard also against fetid air. The more the bodily heat can be kept up by natural and the less by artificial means, the better. As "natural means" we include heavy clothing, nourishing food, air well supplied with oxygen, and physical exercise. Artificial heat is secured by fire through the various heating systems.

A person who is well fed and well clothed and who moves briskly can easily support prolonged exposure to the severest cold. The greatest danger in Canada is the shock to the system produced by getting over-heated indoors and then going outside in zero weather. This is also a prolific cause of colds.

Most Canadian houses are overheated in winter. Their average temperature is often higher than during the summer months and certainly higher than in spring and autumn. This is unnecessary, it wastes fuel and it endangers health. Women are prone to wear too light clothing in winter. It would be much safer for them to dress more warmly and have their houses ten degrees cooler.—C. A. Hodgetts in "Conservation."

Dominion Workmen's Compensation Meeting

A convention of representatives of workmen's compensation boards in Canada was held in Vancouver on December 4th. An Association of Canadian Workmen's Compensation Boards was formed, and S. Price, chairman of the Ontario Workmen's Compensation Board, was elected president. E. S. H. Winn, chairman of the British Columbia Board, was chosen vice-president, while M. B. Wormith, of Toronto, was elected secretary. The executive will be composed of the president, vice-president, and J. T. Stirling, of Edmonton, Alta., chairman of the Alberta Board. Toronto was chosen as the place of meeting in October, 1920. The boards will endeavor to bring about uniform legislation throughout the provinces. A resolution asks to have the benefits of compensation laws extended to all wage-earners whose average annual earnings are less than \$2,000. Another resolution passed advocates the vesting, through legislation, of the enforcement of accident prevention measures in the various boards.

Can West Have Steel Industry

Problem Depends Largely on Supply of Capital and Labor— Coal, Iron and a Shipbuilding Business Seem To Be Proper Combination For Today

At the recent meeting of the Canadian Mining Institute a lively interest was manifested in the long debated subject of the possibility of an iron and steel industry in the Province of British Columbia. The editor of Iron & Steel of Canada was asked to start the discussion, and delivered a series of remarks which were, in effect, a review of the history of the iron and steel industry of Nova Scotia, presented in such form that British Columbian auditors could make their own deductions on the analogies which exist between the extreme East and the extreme West of Canada in this connection.

The genesis of a successful iron and steel industry in Cape Breton Island came about through the presence of large deposits of coal, suitable for the manufacture of metallurgical coke, close to an excellent harbor, favorably situated with regard to world markets, near large deposits of limestone and dolomite, and within easy transportation distance of the unique iron-ore deposit of Wabana, Newfoundland. It may here be remarked that even the people of the East have not quite grasped the valuable and illimitable character of the Wabana deposit.

Coal had been mined in Cape Breton for seventy years, but the industry was backward. Winters of idleness and summers of rush and hurry to obtain the largest possible outputs, made for unsatisfactory labor conditions, general instability and lack of progress. The resources of Cape Breton lay dormant until a man of vision in the person of Mr. B. F. Pearson collected facts and figures and presented them so convincingly as to interest Mr. H. M. Whitney, with whose advent into Cape Breton there commenced those consolidations of scattered coal properties and the influx of capital which made possible the coal and steel industry of Cape Breton as it exists today. Many undesirable happenings, mark the Sydney "boom," but, whatever may have been the shortcomings of those days, the result has proved there is a legitimate place for the "entrepreneur," for the promoter of industrial enterprises who has vision and faith—but—before the promoter must come the careful compiler of commercial facts, who must demonstrate from the results of painful research and the slow accumulation of uninteresting but essential facts and figures that a sound basis exists upon which to found the projected industry. That the reward of the man who digs the foundation is often less than the reward of those who come after him seems to be one of life's ironies that must be accepted.

The lesson taught by events in Cape Breton and elsewhere, is that a steel industry in an outgrowth of the presence of coal.

The founders of the Cape Breton coal and steel industries appreciated the vital importance of transportation, and they provided large fleets of modern freighters.

Events have also showed that neither the steel companies nor the coal companies of Cape Breton are entirely self-supporting. One is the complement of the other. The underlying stability of the coal companies has enabled the steel companies to take advantage of periods of prosperity in the steel industry, the monetary results of which, in their turn, have greatly helped the coal companies.

The lesson that appears to be deducible from these gradual developments, is that the most successful and permanent combination of industry is that of an associated industry of iron and steel

manufacture, with steel-ship building, both based on large reserves of coal, iron-ore and fluxes, having a suitable maritime location.

If actual events in the East seem to be foreshowing the completion of such an evolution it should not be any matter for surprise, as such combinations have proved successful elsewhere.

In the application of this conclusion to British Columbian conditions, it is worthy of note that the technical conditions existing in Cape Breton were always most favorable, and such as might be expected to bring about cheap costs of operation. Nevertheless, the problems of the iron and steel industry have always been those of competitive markets and relative wages.

British Columbia has imperfectly known iron-ore deposits, but sufficient is ascertained concerning these deposits to show that they are large and valuable. The maritime and strategic location exists on either the mainland coast or on Vancouver Island, but most important of all considerations is the existence of coking coal on Vancouver Island.

The analogy between the relative position of the iron ore deposit of Wabana and Cape Breton Island, and the position of Vancouver Island to the known iron-ore deposits of British Columbia is very exact, even to the existence of large deposits of undersea coal on the extreme east and west coasts of Canada.

Fuel costs are basic in the steel and iron industries. The problem of iron smelting and steel manufacture is chiefly that of providing great heat supply at a low cost.

The possession of large deposits of coking coal of metallurgical grade is British Columbia's chief industrial asset.

It is questionable whether the people of the West realize the tremendous concentration of the fuel resources of Canada in the two Western Provinces of Alberta and British Columbia. The map which is attached to the Final Report of the Fuel Controller shows that Alberta alone contains more coal than all the rest of Canada put together, and also contains more coal than any single State in the American Union, besides being a vast potential oil reserve.

Empire and national growth follow the possession (and the utilization) of coal, and where coal and iron exists by the side of the sea, wherever true British stock is to be found, they must fulfil the maritime destiny of our associated British peoples. It is the way of the race. The future of coal, iron and shipbuilding on the British Columbia coast is not a purely local question. It is far wider in its implications, and imperial in its scope.

The considerations affecting a future iron and steel industry are primarily two, viz.:

- a. Technical questions;
- b. Economic and social questions.

Economic problems come first in importance. If a real necessity exists for the manufacture of iron and steel in British Columbia, the technical problems present no insuperable obstacle.

Dr. Stansfield's report on the manufacture of pig-iron from B.C. magnetites by use of the electric furnace is full, complete and authoritative, but it must be borne in mind that Dr. Stansfield reported as a professor of metallurgy, on certain set questions, and not as a promoter, and that since his report was made the knowledge of B.C. iron-ore resource has been enlarged. Dr. Stansfield's report is the document which will

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