

ENORMOUS TAXATION

British Columbia Industry Dying While Beyond Her Borders Business Booms.

Plain Speaking From the Citizens of Rossland at Board of Trade Banquet to the Hon. Minister of Mines-- Iniquitous 2 Per Cent Tax--Sentiment Unanimous

One-Fifth of Everything Produced Is Seized by the Government in Taxes.

The two per cent mineral tax is iniquitous. It throttles the development of the Rossland area...

be frank and cordial, not diplomatic. I don't think I can assume or live up to the role of the diplomat, but...

lead mining is concerned. I can assure you it will give my colleagues and myself the greatest pleasure to endorse any resolutions...

tonight of the various progress we have made from the beginning, more particularly of our own district, and you all realize that it is only a few months since we emerged from a wilderness to a mining camp...

but one of these questions, and that is one which stands like a stone wall before us; namely, the two per cent tax. It is useless to go into details about this tax. You all understand it. You all know its fatal defect, which is to exact an increasing proportion of the net profits when applied to the lower grades of ore...

closed down, and those operating have, with few exceptions, ceased to pay dividends. The working mines are struggling under heavy burdens, which are still accumulating each year. It is now frankly admitted by mining men that the industry is prostrated in many mining divisions and that its condition is rapidly becoming worse, due to two causes, first, excessive taxation; second, oppressive legislation.

In his address in response to an enthusiastic toast, Colonel Prior informed the gathering that he was in the Kootenays for the purpose of obtaining information in discussing the affairs of the mining industry. This sentiment was adopted in word and spirit...

Now, gentlemen, this is my first visit to Rossland since holding the position of minister of mines, a position, I can assure you, whatever you may think, I am very proud of. I saw noted in the Victoria "Times" newspaper, a paper which sees fit to oppose me politically, that the minister of mines was coming up to the Kootenay district, and that men there had prepared a pretty hot time for him.

The government of which I am a member is not either Liberal or Conservative, but, as you know, has both Liberals and Conservatives in it. I therefore do not appeal to you as a Liberal. I am here to find out from you, gentlemen, who are present here tonight, and who are perfectly able to teach me, what you think is the best thing for the government to do and what action they should take to put the mining industry on a firm and paying basis. I don't know whether any of you gentlemen can do, WE CAN TRY. I ask you one and all, I ask you gentlemen to speak and kindly give me what information you possibly can which will be of service to me in order that I may lay the facts of the case before my colleagues and see whether, with the little ability I have in me, I can make out a case for you so that before long you will be saying, "Well, Prior's visit did something. Whatever is done will have to be for the greatest benefit of the mining industry as a whole."

I thank you again, Mr. Mayor and gentlemen, for your great kindness to me in offering me this banquet and in giving your time here tonight. I can assure you all it will make a great impression on my memory, and I will be glad to have the same good impression of me that I have of you tonight. An ovation was tendered the minister of mines on the conclusion of his address. The manner in which Colonel Prior delivered his remarks was devoid of diplomatic mannerisms, being in fact, the expression of a business man to business men. As such the gathering appealed strongly to the miners, who are at this substantially to the warmth of the applause following his remarks.

Here in Rossland the fortunes of the entire community, with that of two neighboring towns, rests upon the ore shoots of Red Mountain, and it is useless to disguise the anxiety which is felt at the present moment among the citizens of Rossland as to the future of their mining operations. Taking the mines as a whole, the present condition is a very simple one and one which all may understand. As is invariably the case with large ore deposits, the grade tends to settle down to a general average which is below that of the occasional bonanza bodies to which the bodies large quantities of low grade ore are exposed which cannot be mined profitably at the present scale of costs. These low grade ore bodies afford the basis for a prosperous and long-lived town, but before they can be reached many problems must be solved and a long list of difficulties overcome, not the least of which is the difficulty in inducing investors to risk under British Columbia conditions the large capital required for milling.

Mr. Kirby spoke as follows: Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen: Themistocles once said: "cannot play upon any stringed instrument, but I can tell you how to get a little village to make a great and glorious city." I find myself tonight unable to entertain you by romance, poetry and eloquence, but I can tell you how to make, if not a great and glorious city, at least a prosperous and long-lived town. It is characteristic of the west not to yield to despondency. The western temper is to look forward and difficulties squarely in the face and to find new means of overcoming them. Experience has long since shown that there is no more certain road to misfortune and failure than a refusal to see and frankly acknowledge facts as they are. We are all face to face with the realities of unprofitable mining, not with the meaningless figures of statistics, which in this case do not represent the true condition of the mining industry. There is not one of us here tonight who does not realize the decline which has occurred in the mining industry in British Columbia and the anxiety so widely felt with regard to its fate here in Rossland. We talk about it frankly in the street; why should we not do so in public? We can make the evil, the more public we can call attention to the causes of that evil, the more certain it is that reform will come. We all know that the great cause of the depression now coming over the British Columbia mining industry is excessive and overwhelming taxation, and the only hope of relief is not in secrecy and concealment but in the open. What is the use of concealment? Ask any prominent investor in London, Montreal, Toronto or New York and you will find him already fully informed as to this fact and also concerning the various other difficulties which at the present moment make investments in British Columbia undesirable. The question before us is what are we, who have the interests of British Columbia at heart, going to do about it, and while this question waits for an answer the paralysis slowly extends.

THE MINISTER IS SEEKING INFORMATION AND ADVICE ABOUT MINING. Mr. Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Gentlemen: In looking at the Rossland Miner this morning I noticed a very nice and kind little article in regard to myself, and one item stated that as soon as I came to Rossland, I should find the latch string hanging on the outside. Well, Mr. Mayor, I have found that to be the fact, for at none of the places I have visited since I went into public life, has there been kinder treatment than I have experienced since landing in Rossland this time. (Hear, hear.) I know, sir, this town is famed for its splendid banquets (hear, hear), and I know that the accounts of these banquets have been telegraphed to the ends of the world. I am only glad that it is my good fortune to be present at one of them tonight. The paper also said it wanted me to

A RAILROAD KING WHO BANKS ON CITY'S FUTURE. The other toast on the list was that of "The Mining Interests," proposed by Arthur S. Goodeve, the "silver-tongued orator of the Kootenays," and responded to by a bright galaxy of mining men--Edmund B. Kirby, general manager of the War Eagle and Centre Star Mining companies; William Thompson, manager of the Rossland Great Western allied mining properties; Charles V. Jenkins, the financial representative of the War Eagle and Centre Star mining companies, and Roscoe Rolph Leslie, general superintendent of the Le Roi mine. Mr. Goodeve made a characteristic and eloquent address in proposing the toast. He said in part: Mr. Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Gentlemen: I am glad that we have with us tonight the Honorable Minister of Mines and that it has been my privilege for the first time to meet him yesterday afternoon, but I can assure you the gathering appealed strongly to the miners, who are at this substantially to the warmth of the applause following his remarks.

CONDITION OF ROSSLAND MINING. Here in Rossland the fortunes of the entire community, with that of two neighboring towns, rests upon the ore shoots of Red Mountain, and it is useless to disguise the anxiety which is felt at the present moment among the citizens of Rossland as to the future of their mining operations. Taking the mines as a whole, the present condition is a very simple one and one which all may understand. As is invariably the case with large ore deposits, the grade tends to settle down to a general average which is below that of the occasional bonanza bodies to which the bodies large quantities of low grade ore are exposed which cannot be mined profitably at the present scale of costs. These low grade ore bodies afford the basis for a prosperous and long-lived town, but before they can be reached many problems must be solved and a long list of difficulties overcome, not the least of which is the difficulty in inducing investors to risk under British Columbia conditions the large capital required for milling.

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MINERAL TAX PREVENTS TREADWELLS IN B. C. Mr. Thompson followed, as in the following powerful presentation of the case for the abolition of mineral taxation in its present form: Mr. Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Gentlemen: I felt very much disappointed when our esteemed and worthy vice-chairman, Governor Mackintosh, was proposing the health of our distinguished guest. I thought Governor Mackintosh would offer to tell us a little of Colonel Prior's history and his connection with the development of this glorious Dominion of Canada. I can only imagine that the Governor, through his modesty, refrained from saying anything because he has been so closely connected with the gentleman and in the same work himself in past years. I mention this fact, not for political reasons, but simply to impress upon the gentlemen gathered around this festive board how the province of British Columbia is to be congratulated in getting a man such as Colonel Prior, one who has the courage of his convictions and the necessary training to be able to make the mining industry of British Columbia a magnificent success. (Hear, hear.) There stands today on Dominion Square in the great city of Montreal (the largest city in the Dominion of Canada) near the Windsor Hotel a monument that I always feel like raising my hat to, not out of political respect, but in admiration of the man who placed British Columbia in the Dominion's admiration and respect to the Right Honorable Sir John A. Macdonald. You have had for a number of years resident in your city two of Sir John A. Macdonald's closest friends and advisers in Governor Mackintosh and the Hon. T. Mayne Daly; tonight we have another of our guests of the evening, Colonel Prior, the minister of mines for the province. I need not go back far in Canadian history, to recall the time when it became the ambition of Sir John A. Macdonald to connect the Atlantic and the Pacific together with bands of steel, and how his almost superhuman efforts were at last crowned with success, thus placing British Columbia on the map and giving the entire world a chance to help develop a magnificent and successful province. I hope I may be pardoned if I address my next few remarks directly to Colonel Prior rather than to the chairman and members around this board. The Colonel gave us certain statistical figures tonight from the general public that he has issued, and I am interested in knowing that, but the investor is more interested in knowing how much of that twenty million of dollars he gets. (Hear, hear.) I wish, sir, to quote from an editorial dealing with British Columbia mining appearing two years ago in one of the best mining journals published in the United States, the truth of which cannot be gainsaid by the lapse of time: "The developments of these resources begun a few years ago so auspiciously, has been brought to a practical standstill; and, whereas, a few years ago the mountains were swarming with prospectors, today these pioneers of the mining industry have nearly disappeared; the flow of capital into the province has been practically cut off; numbers of producing mines have been

In addition to the present high grade ores we have been shipping to the smelting works, we have been assured by the best engineers and managers of this camp that there are immense quantities of low grade ores under Red Mountain that cannot at present be extracted at a profit (owing chiefly to their highly silicious nature) without some preliminary concentration before smelting, and Mr. Kirby has tonight announced that the War Eagle and Centre Star companies are prepared to undertake the concentrations of these low grade ores as soon as the government is willing to relieve them from the odium of the present excessive taxation. (Hear, hear.) Now, let us cross Centre Star gulch and examine Monte Cristo and Kootenay mountains. We find low grade ores there, consisting of heavy sulphide of iron, carrying medium gold and silver values and low copper. These ores carry an excess of iron over their silicious contents, ranging from 20 per cent to 45 per cent, making them a most favorable flux for lead smelting operations, and when I say there are hundreds of thousands of tons of this ore blocked out in these mountains in the various mines, such as the Kootenay, Monte Cristo, Iron Horse, Iron Colt, Mascot, Virginia, etc., not one ton of which is being shipped to the smelters, I do not overstate the fact. Let me take, sir, for your information a characteristic ore. We will say one-

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Table with 2 columns: Asked, Bid. Lists various items and prices.

W. T. & Co. Brokers. Real Estate Broker. Stock Exchange.

W. Jackson Co. Real Estate Broker. Stock Exchange.

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