speakers at the meeting of Kootenay Boards of Trade delegates at Rossland the other day asking for better roads, prompter postal service, more Government officials; also for a different system of county or district organization, and additional land registry offices. The fact is that an up-to-date population is pouring into the Kootenay country, who want the latest and the best of everything and are willing to pay for it, from food and clothing to roads and government. Nor will any-one find fault with them, if they will only be reasonable enough to remember that it is difficult to all at once arrange the machinery of either provincial or municipal government to meet the demands of communities that grow so fast as our Kootenay towns.

Without attempting to discuss the subject of parliamentary representation, which made some figure at the convention, or to pronounce upon the silver-lead question, which has two sides, we may say that the suggestions made towards quarterly bulletins of mining output, improved postal service, a vastly increased outlay on roads, are eminently deserving of attention and prompt action. To compass the last-named object may require, very likely does require, a departure from the methods of procedure hitherto prevailing in British Columbia; but the matter is an essential one, and cannot be achieved by timid or half-hearted measures. If money be borrowed for so essential a purpose as this, we have no doubt the people will give the Government their warrant of approval. Technical training is an important thing for a province so rich in minerals as British Columbia, but whether it can best be imparted by Government aid is not so clear. Meanwhile, the gentlemen who met at Rossland in this convention have done good work in voicing the needs and claims of their province.

THE NEW COTTON CROP.

Recent figures as prepared by reliable cotton statisticians show the coming crop of cotton in the southern States to be in the neighborhood of 12,000,000 bales. How rapidly this crop has been increasing is shown by the following triennial averages taken at periods ten years apart:

	Bales.
1866-9	2,422,000
1876-9	4,777,000
1886-9	6,947,000
1896-9	10,390,000

In view of this wonderful increase in the cotton production of the United States it is strange that the crops in other countries have not shown a similar tendency. The yield of cotton in India is stationary. In 1893 it was 2,576,000 bales of 400 pounds; in 1898 it was 2,500,000 bales. In the intervening years it rose to 2,915,000 in 1896, and fell to 2,172,000 in 1897. The British administration has been favorable to the cotton culture of Egypt, but there are physical limits to the arable land in the Nile valley. Russia is making great efforts to domesticate cotton culture in certain provinces and without results, but they are thus far small relatively to the world's supply and consumption.

THE OPENINGS.

The Millinery Openings of Toronto will commence on August 28th, and those of Montreal a day later. The spring and fall openings of the millinery trade have been accepted by the dry goods trade as a fitting occasion in which to make their warehouses attractive and extend a welcome to retail merchants. The openings cannot be said to actually open a season of trade between the retail and wholesale trades. Since the middle of June travellers have been soliciting orders for autumn millinery, and orders for staple goods are now pretty well placed. The Openings mainly serve to display the new styles and trimmed shapes, and at the same time bring together the different members of the trade for an exchange of ideas. Buying is, however, not wholly neglected. There is many "a good thing" picked up at the Openings, which by the way reminds of a bit of advice to the trade the other day, namely, "Don't buy too many of a 'good thing,' there will be others later on. Variety is what you want." Although the autumn may open with the popularity of the Rough Rider hat in its various species, it appears to be a general opinion that the present will be a milliners' season. There are a variety of entirely new shapes, which by the exercise of the milliner's art can be made most attractive, and all look for a season in which trimmings are called into requisition. We do not intend to attempt a description of the new shapes in this issue, but cannot pass without mention of a new shape with a high crown in Tam o' Shanter effect. It gives the milliners almost unrivalled opportunities for the creation of novel effects. We look for an excellent season in the millinery trade during the spring of 1900.

OUR AUSTRALIAN LETTER.

As you have learned by cable, the bill for federating the Australian colonies was adopted by the people of New South Wales, on the 20th ult. The vote has not been officially announced, but the majority will be slightly under twenty-five thousand. The fullness of the vote and the extent of the majority were agreeable surprises to Federalists, who, though fairly certain of a majority, would have been content with one-half its size. South Australia has also adopted the measure. Victoria and Tasmania will do so in a month, and Queensland probably in September. The probabilities are that Western Australia may stay out of the group for a time. Even if Queensland should not agree the federation of four colonies will take place, and if the States, as the individual members of the new commonwealth will be known, expedite matters, a Federal Parliament will meet inside of eighteen months in Melbourne, which is to be the capital until a permanent one is selected.

The chief problem of the Federation here, as in the case of Canada, was the financial one. All the colonies derived a considerable revenue from customs and excise, and all but New South Wales had stiff tariffs on most articles imported. Each state will be left with nearly all its present expenditures to meet, and most of its revenue given to the central government. A very easy solution of the difficulty was available by assuming sufficient of the heavy debts of the several states to cover their deficits, but the stupid interprovincial jealousies stood in the way and a clumsy contrivance was adopted, which for ten years necessitates an account to be kept of all the imports into each state separately, whether by sea or across the interstate borders, and requires that the commonwealth treasurer shall pay monthly to each state three-fourths of the net revenue that will be derived from its customs and excises. This involves two unpleasant things. It compels all imports into Sydney and Melbourne, the two great distributing centres, to be entered at these ports and again entered if reshipped to another colony. Duty will only be paid once, but there will be the trouble of double invoices, etc. The other is that the treasurer of the new commonwealth will have to raise a revenue by customs and excise of eight millions of pounds, the great bulk of it by customs. Liquor and tobacco will bear a large share, but there is likely to be a general tariff of fifteen per cent., with a certainty that it will be distributed with protection as its purpose.

The Premier of New South Wales has been regarded as a champion of Free Trade, and has boasted that he has given his colony the freest tariff in the world. Latterly he has shown signs of backsliding—and in a recent speech he intimated that he is getting new light and broader views on the fiscal question. This is taken to mean that he is not going to allow any scruples regarding free trade to stand in the way of his securing the Premiership of the united colonies.

The first Parliament will pass a tariff which will tell against importations. There is just now a feeling in favor of following in the Canadian wake, and granting a preference to the products of the Empire. If this be done Canada will not be injured. The conditions of trade will be materially improved by Federation, and already there are some indications of it. If in