

SMELT THE ORES IN CANADA.

The following article under the above heading appears in the Toronto World:

"The great bulk of the ore of the mines in the Kootenay country whether gold or silver, is shipped across the boundary line into the United States for the purpose of smelting. It is true there is one large smelter near Rossland and a promise of others being built; but as long as the present system is allowed to continue just so long will the smelting of Canadian ores be carried on largely in the United States, to the great profit of Americans and to the certain loss of Canadians. The News-Advertiser, a paper published in Vancouver, brings up this question. It points out that the output of the silver mines in the Slocan district is finding its way to the American smelter at Tacoma, and calls upon the people of Vancouver to take some steps to prevent it. In view of the fact that the output of the Slocan mines is certain to develop in a very short time into enormous proportions, our western contemporary asks the citizens of Vancouver to take the matter up seriously, and to erect a smelter in that city. This, we take it, is a wise move on the part of the people of Vancouver. But something more has to be done, and that something by the Dominion government. Parliament at its next session ought to pass a law putting a heavy export duty on all ore going out of the country for smelting purposes and even matte—which is the product of the smelters going out of the country for the final process of refinement. The World, furthermore, would support any government which would bonus or subsidize, if private capital does not seek its way to giving it, smelters for handling the British Columbia ores. Mining may be profitable to the individuals who reap the profits of valuable mines, but mining is much more profitable to the people of the country when all the work in connection therewith is distributed among them and not given to the miners, smelters and refiners of foreign countries. Now is the time for the government at Ottawa to show whether it is equal to the occasion and ready to do whatever is necessary to make British Columbia and Ontario and the other provinces a source of wealth and work to the people of our own country and not a source of wealth and work to our rivals who live in the country to the south of us."

The World has been and is a good friend to mining and to West Kootenay. It is sad to see such an article published in such a paper. It is certain that if the World were better acquainted with the existing conditions it would not have published such an article and it is to be hoped that it will reconsider its position. In one particular not only its arguments but its facts are wrong. The Dominion government has given a bonus to smelters established in Canada, a very beneficial bonus.

The United States by placing a duty on lead ores and also by insisting on sampling works at ports of entry has also encouraged smelting in Canada. But this action, precisely similar in effect to an export duty, has injured mining here more than it has assisted smelting. Mining employs ten men where smelting employs one, and wages in mining are higher. Can we afford to tax mining to foster smelting? Further than that, the success of the mining industry depends, not on where the ore is smelted, but on how much of the ore is mined. But it may be argued that an export duty on ore would not be a tax on mining. It would, and a most iniquitous tax. Successful smelting is a very difficult problem, depending on many different conditions. Some low grade ores can be treated more profitably where they are mined. In this case smelters come fast enough where they are needed. Other low grade ores acquire commercial value from their use in smelting other ores. These must be shipped. For instance, the wet ores of the Slocan are eagerly sought after to smelt the dry ores found in many sections of the United States. Canada ships those ores at a premium. What is the result? The Slocan has stood the depression and has revived quicker than any purely silver-lead producing country in the world. Mining is active there, wages are high and people are prosperous. Should all this be killed to keep a hundred men employed running a smelter? Surely not. The World goes further and further astray when it talks about refining. How long is it since the United States became a metal refining country? How much crude bullion and matte does the United States still export?

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Of course, everyone hopes to see Canada some day with a mint and a market of her own and a large home market for refined copper and lead. But in the meantime Canada has no market for gold and silver, and a limited market for copper and lead. Therefore, having made she must export these articles. Now, this appears to be logic. If we can manufacture gold and silver, lead and copper, more cheaply than the outsider, then there is no advantage in an export duty. If we can not find at present we certainly could not, then, being obliged to sell at the same rate, the increased cost of production must come out of the ore. That is to say, mines near the minimum of pay would be closed down and the opening up of low grade mines would be checked. The principle of protection, good or bad, is bound up within the limits of the home market. The idea of protecting a product which must be exported to find a market is ridiculous. The article concludes with the well-worn reference, "Is our rivalry of that unspeakable type which would go so far as to injure ourselves in order to prevent a benefit to our rivals?" If both benefit mutually should we not be glad rather than sorry?

RUSSIA AS A GOLD PRODUCER.

The importance of Russia as a gold producer has never been fully appreciated, partly because of the remoteness of the chief gold fields, and partly because the output is carefully kept at home, and very little of it enters into the world's general stock. Very few people realize that, taking the production of 1895 as a basis, the Russian mines furnish about one-sixth of the total output of the yellow metal, and that the probability is that this proportion will increase rather than diminish. So far as the Siberian gold fields, which furnish the greater part of the production, are concerned, it may be said that the work already done is entirely superficial. Only the placers have been worked and those generally in a rather primitive way, while explorations have been in the main limited to the haphazard work of the prospectors. A few Russian engineers have from time to time undertaken some more scientific work, but this has been limited to a few districts. Deep mining is almost unknown and the search for gold-bearing veins has hardly been begun anywhere outside of the Oural region. It seems probable that a few years will see an important change. Already foreign capital is becoming interested, and preparations are being made for the exploitation on a large scale and with modern appliances of the rich placers of Trans-Baikal and the upper valley of the Armour. The work already done in those districts gives assurance of success in the future.

WORK ON THE CALIFORNIA.

Until Saturday, when surface water filled the California shafts there were 18 men at work on the property. Pumping machinery has been ordered and will probably be in place within a week, when work on the shafts will be resumed. The No. 2 shaft is being sunk on a very promising bit of capping near the southwestern corner of the location. It is now down 55 feet, the bottom being in fairly mineralized rock, which is considerably broken up. It is likely that a drift will be run to the north, as the shaft is evidently 50 feet or so from the ore. The working tunnel, now 110 feet on a north and south lead, is following a seam of quartz diorite showing a good deal of mineral. The tunnel will be driven some 150 feet to tap the vein which is traceable on the surface at the top of the hill, and on which good ore was recently found. The site for a compressor plant has been graded but it has not yet been decided whether the company will have its own plant or obtain power for its drills from the Black Bear compressor.

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Time Table in Effect July 1, 1896.

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Leaves Rossland	7:00 a. m.
Arrives at Trail	7:45 a. m.
No. 6. PASSENGER, Sunday only—	
Leaves Rossland	8:30 a. m.
Arrives at Trail	9:15 a. m.
No. 4. PASSENGER, Daily—	
Leaves Rossland	3:00 p. m.
Arrives at Trail	4:00 p. m.
No. 3. PASSENGER, Daily except Sunday—	
Leaves Trail	10:30 a. m.
Arrives at Rossland	11:45 a. m.
No. 1. PASSENGER, Daily—	
Leaves Trail	5:00 p. m.
Arrives at Rossland	5:45 p. m.
No. 5. PASSENGER, Sunday only—	
Leaves Trail	11:00 a. m.
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