

rise to confusion and is an actual deterrent to investors. Moreover, there is ground for the belief that grave abuses exist in mining districts that are under Federal administration. This has been true of the Yukon; it is true, we fear, of Alberta. This resolution is timely.

The second resolution, referring to the consolidation of all Federal mining laws, might well be extended to embrace the laws of each Province. Naturally this is a matter that demands long debate and systematic study of the mining laws of foreign countries. Only thus can pitfalls be avoided. Essentially this is work that can best be done by the continuous efforts of a Royal Commission. It is doubtful if any committee, meeting twice or thrice a month, can cope successfully with a subject so large and so intricate.

The last resolution requires little comment. If our country is to reach its appointed goal, all restrictions and hindrances must be removed from the path of the prospector. To-day, thousands upon thousands of square miles of mineral territory may be regarded as lost to the prospector. This applies with equal force to lands administered by the Provincial Governments.

During the coming winter the Committee will continue its investigations. It has succeeded in starting on the right path. But it will require guidance and direction. Last year's delegation from the Canadian Mining Institute was hastily summoned, was by no means representative, and, individually, the delegates were given insufficient time to prepare themselves. Further, the Committee as a whole lacked knowledge of the mining industry.

The latter condition will remedy itself, and it is the duty of the Canadian Mining Institute to see that future delegates have ample time to prepare their evidence. In fact this is a subject that should engage the attention of the executive of the Institute throughout the winter. A strong committee should be appointed at once. The Institute can do more than any other body to enlighten Ottawa as to the requirements of mining.

Incidentally, we can see little use in having twenty-five members on the Select Standing Committee of the House. Ten carefully chosen members would accomplish more in a given time with less friction and with more effect. The attendance at the four meetings last session never exceeded fourteen, and once dwindled to five. What results can we expect in these circumstances?

A Royal Commission, consisting of five selected and representative men, adequately remunerated for their labours, would have arrived long before this at results that will not for many months be attained by the Committee as at present constituted.

Our hope is that the very meagreness of the reports under discussion will induce the Select Standing Committee itself to recommend a Royal Commission.

THE MINERS' MINE.

That capital and caste have their uses was demonstrated in a curiously effective manner by the failure of a socialistic venture in France.

It was in the year 1891 that a concession of about 200 acres of coal lands in the Loire coal basin was purchased, largely by public subscription, and placed in the hands of an association of workingmen, amongst whom all profits were to be equally divided.

With a tremendous flourish of trumpets the Miners' Mine became an active producer of coal.

Before affairs had got decently in working order trouble arose. Outside miners, not members of the society, were employed by the regular members. The outsiders claimed a share in the profits.

Another source of strife and heart-burnings was the fact that during the times of depression, a general reduction in wages had to be made. Against this the miners kicked violently. The logic of the situation did not appeal to them. The controlling power of capital was absent, and wages fluctuated with every temporary vicissitude.

The impatience of the miners (in this case the shareholders) and the ludicrous impossibility of the whole scheme, became most potent in 1905. In that year no less than five chairmen were successively elected and deposed.

The closing scenes in the history of the Miners' Mine were enacted in the autumn of 1908. An exhausted treasury, urgent creditors, two serious fires and severe trade depression, together with internal dissensions, were more than the shaky edifice could stand. The collieries were closed, a receiver was appointed, and the society breathed its last painful corporate breath.

It is not for us to say that all such experiments are foredoomed to failure. But there does appear to be an illustration here of the futility of attempting to apply the fantastic principles of socialism—the socialism that is expounded by labour agitators—to a modern business enterprise. We fear that before a Miners' Mine will have proved a commercial success coal will have been superseded as a source of energy.

INSPECTION OF MINES.

Already in the United States there are indications that mine inspection is to become a conjoint function of the Federal and State authorities. This has been proved the more imperative by last year's shocking coal mine catastrophes. The United States Geological Survey has taken the matter in hand, and has begun an educational campaign.

Doubtless this consummation will not be reached rapidly. Difficulties expected and difficulties as yet unforeseen will crop up. But it must be brought about sooner or later, for only thus can the highest degree of safety be guaranteed to those who labour underground.

What is true of the United States is doubly true of Canada. Uniformity in our mine inspection regulations