

The silver-lead mine operators of the Slocan and other producing districts appear now to be unanimous upon the lines on which a recommendation should be made to the Federal Government with a view to the affording of relief and protection to the industry, and at a meeting held for the purpose the following resolutions were passed:—

"This meeting of silver-lead miners is of the opinion that a protective tariff on imported lead in ores, pig lead and its products is desirable subject to the conditions that it be clearly shown and assurance given that such tariff will be of direct benefit to the silver-lead miner rather than the smelters and refineries only.

"We would further recommend that lead bullion, smelted and refined and otherwise, treated in bond in foreign countries, be re-admitted to the Dominion of Canada upon the payment of an ad valorem duty of 15 per cent. of the cost of smelting and refining, corroding or other process of manufacturing."

The question is full of difficulties, for which the comparatively sparse population of the Dominion and the consequent limited consumption of lead and lead products by the country itself, but nevertheless a greater measure of relief and a general betterment of conditions is much more likely to be brought about by an adjustment of the tariff than by the alternative suggestion of inducing the Government to grant a bounty on lead ores. It is meanwhile satisfactory to remark that so eminent an authority as Mr. J. R. Wilson, vice-president and general manager of the Thomas Robertson & Co., Ltd., metal merchants of Montreal, after testifying to the excellent quality of British Columbian lead, has expressed the opinion that there is no reason why, by tariff adjustment, the corroding of pig lead should not become an active industry in Canada, and that all the white lead used, amounting to about 9,000 tons annually, should not be manufactured in our own country from our own raw material.

The work of constructing a branch line of the Great Northern railway into the Crow's Nest is now approaching completion, and by the opening of this road another important market for the product of the East Kootenay collieries will be afforded. It is stated semi-officially that the charge for haulage on coal from the Morrissey mines to Spokane will be two dollars per ton, and consequently dealers can be supplied at \$3.75. The retail price should not therefore exceed \$5.00 a ton, or a dollar per ton less than consumers at present are required to pay for the local

Washington coal. The opening of this railway means also a great deal to the Le Roi Company, whose smelter at Northport will thus be supplied with coke at a cheaper rate. Meanwhile in the Flathead Valley, to the south of the Crow's Nest, large coal areas are reported to have been discovered this year, over 200 applications having been made to the Government during the past few months for permission to prospect for coal and petroleum in South East Kootenay. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company also sent this last summer a party of surveyors and explorers into the Flathead Valley and discoveries of an important nature are reported to have been made. The area prospected this year embraces a territory of nearly 200 square miles, throughout which the indications are said to be extraordinarily promising. It is thought that the Canadian Pacific Railway contemplate building branch lines from Crow's Nest into this country in the near future and preliminary surveys have been made from the Morrissey coal fields in a south-easterly direction down a tributary of Lodge Pole Creek, and thence east to the headwaters of the Flathead River. Another survey for a railway has also been made from a point on the Crow's Nest branch road, near Elko, southward down the Wigwam River, and thence north and east to the Flathead.

Looking to the future, no mining developments this year have, perhaps, been so important as those which have taken place in the historic district of Cariboo. Until next season the result of the work will not be definitely known, but if as is expected, the ancient river-bed systems can be successfully tapped, and the gravels yield anything like the six dollars to the cubic yard, as estimated by local men, it is impossible to exaggerate the future possibilities of this class of mining. This month, rather sensational returns are reported to have been obtained from placer mining on a small scale in the working of a long abandoned claim in the vicinity of Lightning Creek—once a famous productive centre. Thus in two days eighty-five ounces were taken out from one set of timbers, eight-foot cap, and previous to that 206 ounces were recovered as a result of seven days' working. Later again a telegraph message to the *Ashcroft Journal* announced that from one spot a pan of gravel was taken and found to contain 56½ ounces of gold, valued at nearly a thousand dollars. The extent of this ground, however, has not as yet been determined. If it runs into Lightning Creek the area will be necessarily limited, but if, as is quite possible.