SMELTER CHARGES INCREASED.

The announcement by the Canadian Consolidated Mining & Smelting Co. of further increases in smelting charges has again somewhat stirred the mine operators of British Columbia and promises to bring prominently to the fore the agitation for a Royal Commission to investigate the affairs of the company, with special reference to the fairness or otherwise of its smelting rates. This matter is before the Dominion Government still, and it is expected that something will be known as to its policy at an early date.

Following is the company's latest statement:—

"Trail, B.C., July 31st, 1918.

"To Lead Ore Shippers:

"Since Schedule B lead-ore rates was published, we have been obliged to pay 40 cents per ton more for coke to the collieries, which under that schedule amounts to an increase of 10 cents per ton of ore. In addition to this, there may be an increase of freight on coke; but we are not certain yet of this, and there will be a further increase in price effective August 1st.

"We have been obliged to increase the wages at the smelter by 30 cents a shift, so that there is an increase of 45 cents per ton under Schedule B on this account.

"Effective August 1st, we will, therefore, increase the base rate under Schedule B by 55 cents per ton, plus 25 per cent. of the further increase in coke price and freight.

"Effective August 12th, rates on lead from Tadnac have been increased to $14.30 to Toronto, and $16.50 per ton to Montreal. The increase in freight rate from that which prevailed at February 1st is, therefore, $2.30 per ton on shipments to Toronto, and common points and $4.50 per ton to Montreal and common points. Commencing with shipments received here in August, we shall be obliged to make an adjustment on account of this freight increase.

"As there is considerable difference now between the Montreal and Toronto freight rates and it is impossible to forecast the distribution owing to variations in munition demand, we, therefore, as the simplest plan, to make this adjustment commencing with the ore received in August, by reducing the lead settlement price by the actual increase in the lead freight rates.

"We will advise you as soon as possible of the amount of the further increases in coke price and freight.

"Yours truly, "(Sgd.) S. G. BLAYLOCK,
"Assistant General Manager."

U.S. Navy Using British Columbia Coal.

Vancouver Island coal is being utilized by the United States Navy Department on a large scale, the Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir), Ltd., having entered into a contract to supply as much as can be mined for export. One of the company's officials, in confirming the report, stated that there was no limit to the amount, it being understood that the Naval Department would take as much as could be delivered. Some weeks ago, the first cargo of coal under the new arrangement was loaded by a vessel of the U.S. Shipping Board's fleet at Comox for delivery at the Pearl Harbor Naval Station, Hawaiian Islands. Others have made calls for coal having a similar destination and all ships making their base at the Bremerton Navy Yard will burn Comox coal. This coal, some years ago, was subjected to exhaustive tests as to its suitability for use on American warships and, as a result, the British Columbia production was declared to be almost as good in steaming qualities as the American Navy standard.

DR. RUTTAN ON POTASH PRODUCTION.

"We are unable to state that there is any process going on in Canada at present where potash is being obtained economically from feldspar, in spite of announcements to the contrary," stated Dr. R. F. Ruttan, at a recent meeting of the Associate Committee on Chemistry of the Honorary Advisory Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. "There is one process that is commercially a success as far as it has gone, and that is hydrolysis of potash feldspar by means of lime and steam at a high pressure. This is being worked in New Jersey and on the Hudson River. The valuable product is a very high grade of brick for exteriors of high buildings, as its crushing strength, resistance to heat and hardness are better than other bricks, and about 6 or 7 per cent. potash is a by-product.

"It has been found that glauconite gives a better yield of the brick-making material and a better yield of potash than can be obtained from feldspar. This company is now utilizing the green sands of New Jersey for the manufacture of these bricks and potash. A report from British Columbia is that a bed of glauconite has been found there. If true, this can be utilized for obtaining potash. The same thing was found in connection with the ash from straw. In each case, the combustion is so rapid that the draught carried away most of the ashes. Condensation of potash salt from vapors of cement works has been a source in the United States, and one firm in Canada has introduced a few condensation pipes for experiments. Analysis of the material used in this plant justified the expenditure necessary to install a Cottrell system. There is no reason why analysis should not be made of the cement dust of all our large cement works through the country, and many, I am sure, could produce sufficient potash to justify the Cottrell process.

"A good deal of potash is now coming in Canada from hardwood ashes. The old industry of collecting these ashes and leaching them for their potash has been renewed in some of the cities, but how much is resulting from this source cannot be estimated. Glauconite is worked in England simply for its potash.

"Some investigations are being carried on in the Kingston School for Mining regarding the use of the nepheline syenite. This rock contained four or five per cent. potash. Progress is now being made in preparing a fertilizer from this rock. I am not sure whether it is a commercial success or not. Every encouragement has been offered those who are investigating methods for obtaining potash from feldspar. So far, there is no absolute proof that any of these processes are commercial."

TEMISKAMING.

The directorate of the Temiskaming Mining Company, Limited, has issued a special report to the shareholders. Production for the five months ending May was 391,367 ounces, while the ore reserves are estimated by the manager at 101,498 ounces. During the six months ending June last considerable development work was carried on, the footage in drifting, cross-cutting, winzing and raising totalling 1,496.2. There are still on the property three unexplored areas in which there are said to be reasonable possibilities of finding commercial ore bodies. It is ten years since the mine began shipping silver, while the total shipping production up to the end of 1917 was 10,837,021 ounces.