

EDITORIAL

TRANSPORTATION FOR THE NEW GOLD AREA.

Relative to the problem of carrying supplies to the West Shining Tree district, which includes the Wasapika gold area described in this number of the Journal, the Toronto World says editorially:

"The World has urged upon the government the necessity of putting more energy into the work of furnishing transportation facilities to the mining interests of the Shining Tree district.

"So long as the government lags on the performance of a manifest obligation it limits and restricts the advantages and benefits which the new gold district is destined to confer upon the entire community. Central among these advantages and benefits at the present moment would be a broad progressive effect upon our industry in minerals and metals, the potentiality of which the financial world is beginning to realize.

"Government is often asked these days to undertake expenditure in different directions where return is both uncertain and substantial. The revenue that comes from the mining industry reaches the public account before the investor gets his dividend, and sometimes before the speculator pockets his profit. Government alienates property in minerals not only because it is absolutely certain of revenue from private ownership, but because the state by obvious indirect sources of gain increasingly supplements taxation of the country's producing mines.

"So long as the certainty of production lies ahead in respect to minerals and metals the first incentive to the attainment of that stage should be felt by the government. But, as the "World" has shown, the West Shining Tree camp has reached that important point of progress along the road to productive success where it must wait for the government to come along with transportation facilities. The government has fallen behind even with temporary facilities.

"Credit must be given where it is due. A good deal of accurate, painstaking and timely work was done in regard to the mineral survey of the district. All this led up, as it was intended, to the opportunity where the government could make a safe investment in the supply of a public service to private investors who had found the government's information about the mineral resources reliable and helpful.

"It would be economy now to hasten not only the temporary transportation facilities, but to make an immediate beginning of the permanent communication by rail. Every month that this work may be delayed will mean pecuniary loss to the government itself and to the general commercial community.

"Judging by the active conditions of the new camp it would appear to be the most questionable economy to rest satisfied for a day with the completion of the wagon road that has so long been demanded."

What is immediately needed for the Wasapika area is an improved wagon road. The Ontario Government is endeavoring to make the present road useful to those who are taking in machinery to develop the gold deposits. No endeavor is yet being made to build a road suitable for motor trucks.

Fortunately the road from Westree to Wasapika crosses fairly level country, and does not encounter many serious obstacles. A bridge has already been constructed across the river at the Halfway. Timber for corduroy stands beside the roadway nearly everywhere. Gravel beds are numerous. The men and teams now at work will be able to greatly improve the road this summer. We would like, however, to see three or four times as many men and horses at work. Next year the area may have sufficiently advanced to warrant the Government converting the wagon road into a first class motor road.

So far as railway construction is concerned it seems to us advisable to consider whether a light railway such as was used in France would not answer the purpose. Returned soldiers who have made the trip to Wasapika have naturally given expression to the view that a light railway would be just the thing, and that it could be constructed economically. A good motor road would answer the purpose, but if the road is not made suitable for motor traffic a railway of some kind will be necessary. Why not a light railway?

MINING PROFITS AND WAGES.

In a statement given out at Cobalt by an official of the Miners' Union we find the following paragraph:

"We want to be a constructive organization. We are miners and do not want to ruin the mining business from which we get our livelihood. We feel, however, that we are entitled to a wage commensurate with the work in which we are engaged. Our future lies in the mining industry as much as there is no doubt that many misunderstandings like those existing in Cobalt today would be wiped out."

This looks to us like an invitation to the managers that should be immediately accepted. As intimated