EDITORIAL

MINING INDUSTRY WANTS A REPRESENTATIVE ON CAPITAL AND LABOR COMMISSION.

At a recent meeting of the Council of the Canadian Mining Institute, it was decided to take action to obtain for the mining industry representation on the Federal Commission appointed to study the relationship between capital and labor. The name of Mr. D. H. McDougall, president of the Canadian Mining Institute, has been suggested in this connection. Mr. McDougall is well qualified to represent employers of labor. He has had much experience in the iron and coal industries, having advanced to the Dominion Iron and Steel Company before he became president of the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Co. He is a successful manager, which means that he understands the human element in industry, as well as the technical side.

It is scarcely likely that the Government will fail to recognize the claim of the mining industry to be represented on this important Commission. That so important an industry should be overlooked when the commission was named is indication of the justice of the claim of those who have recently been agitating for more activity in public affairs by those engaged in the mining industry. We are pleased to see the Mining Institute giving evidence of its interest in this matter, and we hope that no effort will be spared to convince the Government that the mining industry must be recognized.

THE PROSPECTOR'S POINT OF VIEW.

A considerable number of leading prospectors have voiced their opinion with regard to the suggestion that claim holders are likely to be called upon to perform annual instalments of assessment work, or the alternative of paying the equivalent in taxes. Opinion seems to be largely in favor of some such measure, provided it can be applied with a minimum of hardship to the genuine prospector, and with a maximum of penalty for the "land grabbers."

Certain objections have been raised. Those following agricultural pursuits are permitted to secure patent for 160 acres of land, **with the mineral rights thrown in,** for living upon such land for a few months each year, and for clearing a few acres of land, plus fifty cents per acre. Why then should the claim holder be compelled to not only comply with doubly severe obligations, but also be compelled to perform such duties perpetually under penalty of forfeiting all rights to such property, provided his efforts are relaxed for any one period of twelve months? As the mining laws now stand a forty-acre mining claim costs its holder about $1,250 by the time patent is secured. It follows that the cost of 160 acres would amount to approximately $5,000. After reviewing this objection from various angles, it is not difficult to recognize its value. It brings to mind the question of just what affect would added compulsory working conditions or expense have upon the mining industry. Without some definite goal, that of securing a patent in due course and the attendent relief from further work, how many claim holders would stick with their claims and perform even as much work as under the present law? On the other hand, under a system of work or pay, under penalty of forfeiture, mining claims should have greater value because they would not become part and parcel of an idle area in which all work may have ceased and toward which all or nearly interest may have died.

Looking at the question from a prospector's point of view, and supported by a great deal of comment from leading prospectors, it seems that some system of work or pay, although at first appearing as likely to add to the prospector's burdens, should really enure to his general benefit. For instance, should the regulations be changed so as to require 30 days work to be done during the first three months following the staking, followed by 60 days during each of the following two years, then, instead of performing 90 days work during the third year as required under the present law, reduce the amount to 30 days for the third and all subsequent years. In this way, the claimholder, by performing the amount of work as at present required before patent, would hold the claim for a period of five years and three months, plus the expiration of an additional twelve months before his claim would become forfeited, or a total of six years and three months. By that time, in the great majority of cases at least, it would be possible to determine whether or not conditions warranted additional expenditure. If not, the claim would revert to the Crown and not be permitted to become idle. In this way the prospector would always be confronted with an area in which assessment work each year would make it active, or an area through which he could roam at will in search of hidden treasure. This would be in sharp contrast to the present situation in the majority of mining camps, where a few operating mines form the centre of activity, and where, for miles around, large areas of territory are held in idleness, under patent, and with no severe obligations to its holders.

Another point that should perhaps not be lost sight of is this: In cases where claim holders should decide to not perform the year's assessment work, but, instead, pay its equivalent in the form of taxes, the district in which the property is situated should receive the benefit of such taxes, a reasonable part of such money to go toward providing roads, trails, bridges, etc., for the general benefit of all concerned.—J. A. McR.

SHOULD ONTARIO MINING COMPANIES BE REQUIRED TO SPEND PART OF PROFITS IN PROSPECTING?

Officers of mining companies operating in Ontario will find something worth considering in the letter on "Encouraging Prospecting," which appears on another page. It is suggesected that a tax of 2 per cent. be levied on all mining profits, the money thus raised to be expended by the company paying the tax in actual pro-