

results in the running in of a long tunnel to cut the vein in depth, and a few thousand dollars has been spent in convincing the investing public that mining on the coast is treacherous. Until men cease to buy on mere surface showings, without a careful preliminary examination of the local conditions, and learn the golden rule to follow the ore instead of running crosscuts to catch problematical veins at such and such a depth, the investor will continue to mourn his losses.

Several of our readers who are thoroughly in agreement with the policy consistently maintained by the MINING RECORD of discountenancing boom language when applied to the conditions of mining in this country, have called our attention to a paragraph which appeared in connection with a leading article entitled "The Opportunities of Lead Refining," in our last issue, and have asked us for an explanation of what has certainly the appearance of a somewhat senseless exaggeration. The paragraph reads as follows:

"Emancipated from the hampering conditions imposed on their development by the exigencies of an American corporation, and possessed of ready access to the market of the world, it is much more likely in the event that the silver-lead mines of British Columbia will dominate the American Smelting and Refining company, than that the American Smelting and Refining company will dominate the silver-lead mines of British Columbia."

While we agree that the wording is not altogether happy, the paragraph was not written to suggest that under any conceivable circumstances the British Columbia mines could interfere with the operations of the American Smelting and Refining company, but merely to emphasise what we believe to be true, that that company is unable to control the independent development of the British Columbia mines which would "in the event" become a very potent factor in the world's supply of both silver and lead. If our faith in the ultimate great development of our silver-lead mines, was too optimistic expressed, we have erred in very good company, for Mr. J. D. Kendall, than whom few are more careful in expressing an opinion when the future is under discussion, predicted in 1899 — a year before production increased 206 per cent. — that British Columbia would in the near future "become in all probability one of the most important producers of silver-lead ore in the world, if indeed it will not occupy the first position." This, we think, is sufficiently strong language coming from a man who deservedly enjoys an eminently high position in his profession.

While mine operators in this country are too frequently given to the inexcusable habit of making a mountain out of a mole-hill when complaining [of legislation, which though generally beneficial, may put them to slight additional inconvenience or cost, it must be admitted that a real grievance is to be found in the compulsory inspection of boilers by a government official whose work is largely unnecessary and whose fees are

excessively exorbitant. In nearly every case of company operation, boilers are insured and the insurance companies for their own protection inspect the boilers so insured at regular and stated intervals. For this the mining company pays a moderate fee. The arrangement has proved an entirely satisfactory one up to the present time, but at the last session of the legislature an Act was passed which compels a mining company to pay a heavy fee for a government inspection, while, of course, the fee for inspection imposed by the insurance companies must still be paid. The government might surely accept the certificate of a reputable insurance company without requiring a special inspection, and the argument that such a course is not followed in other parts of the world is hardly convincing. Another recent complaint of the mine-owners is that the mine-signal code incorporated in the Metalliferous Mines Inspection Act last session, is unworkable. It is alleged that the unworkability of the system was demonstrated by the mine-managers at Rossland, to the satisfaction of the Hon. the Minister of Finance, who recently visited that district. From what we can gather, however, Mr. Turner reports that the only section of the code which is condemned as unworkable is that relating to "station signals." If this is correct the mine-managers have not succeeded in making out much of a case, for that clause in the code was taken direct from the act in force in the State of Montana and has proved under precisely similar conditions eminently workable. Moreover the clause in question, before its adoption by the Mines department, was submitted and received the approval of all the important mine-managers in the Province, including Mr. Bernard McDonald, of the Le Roi mine, and Mr. Kirby, of the War Eagle and Centre Star.

We regret to learn that less attention is to be paid to British Columbia by the Geological Survey Department this season than last, and that probably but one party will be in the field and investigation confined to the Crow's Nest area only. Although the greater part of West Kootenay has been surveyed geologically there yet remains a vast extent of country in South Yale and other coming mineral productive centres which have not yet been reported upon, and the information is much desired. Meanwhile it is unsatisfactory to note that no less than six very able members of the Geological staff and chiefs of field parties, Messrs. Low, Barlow, McEvoy, J. M. Bell, Brock and Gwillim, have lately resigned from the department in favour of more remunerative private engagements. This should emphasise the fact which we have previously remarked that the salaries paid by Government to members of the Geological survey is absurdly incommensurate, and unless a change is made in this regard the department cannot hope to retain the services of the most capable men for any length of time. We would also suggest the advantage of a freer distribution of the departmental literature.