

Forges, in Quebec, and at Deseronto, Ontario, high grade iron has, for many years, been made in charcoal furnaces; but the increasing difficulty of getting a supply of wood for charcoal has become a very serious problem. The charcoal retorts have been living on capital, and as a natural consequence the supply of wood is getting farther and farther away. If the rocky portions of the country, unfit for farming purposes, were kept permanently covered with forest growth, the annual increase would give a perpetual supply of wood for the manufacture of charcoal, railway ties and mine timber, not to speak of the more general uses, such as for domestic fuel, furniture, farm implements, and buildings.

It is not necessary for Canada to pass through the stages of waste and lack of foresight which have cost some of the European countries so dearly. It is possible for us to take as our object lesson the dreary wastes of bare hillsides in some parts of France and Italy, where millions are now being spent in the effort to restore the forest covering. We might even get our warning nearer home. Wisconsin has eight million acres of worthless lands, once covered with a fine growth of timber. Michigan can also show her warning scars. Both States, with many others, must now consider, if they have not already begun to solve, the slow and very expensive process of reforestation. Why should not Canada omit this stage? She can do so by selecting now the lands which are to remain under forest because unfit for farming, or because the forest is needed to conserve and regulate the flow of water from watersheds. This means wise foresight, a far-seeing view of national interests—in a word, statesmanship.

THE LORD'S DAY ACT

On March 1st the Lord's Day Act became operative in British Columbia. Its rigid enforcement will, beyond all shadow of doubt, militate against the mining and smelting industries, more particularly against the latter. In itself the Lord's Day Act may be an admirable thing. In its general operation it may conduce to the good of the whole Province. But its promoters should take care to inform themselves thoroughly as to its certain effect upon the mining and smelting interests.

There are several metallurgical processes, the whole value of which depends upon their continuity. For example, no iron smelter could survive a regular stoppage of work on Sundays. At nearly all mines a certain amount of labor must be performed on the Sabbath, else work would be suspended on Monday.

We know of a case in our own experience, where the over-zealous apostle of Sabbath observance wrought havoc with a struggling enterprise. Should British Columbia be made to suffer from the intemperance of religious enthusiasts, the whole question of Sabbath observance will receive a serious setback.

MONTREAL RIVER

After such examination as the weather conditions of early spring would permit, Professor Miller reported favorably upon the new silver district lying between Lady Evelyn Lake and Elk Lake. Even tentative official approval will cause a tremendous rush to these areas. As one possible effect of this movement, it is to be hoped that the tropical growth of Larder Lake capitalizations will be checked as by the expulsive power of a new affection.

In his earliest report on Cobalt, Professor Miller asserted that there was every likelihood of recurrences, to the west, of deposits similar to those at Cobalt. This is one addition more to the debt that the Province and the mining fraternity owe to the sagacity and perspicuity of Ontario's Provincial Geologist.

THE PROMOTER

The professional promoter has many sins for which to answer. When the high gods look over his accounts they will notice upon the debit side the scalps of investors innumerable.

The mine promoter, having staked out a claim near the Sinful Sucker, asseverates that since his own property answers to the name of Shameful Swindle, and since both names have an equally sibilant sound, therefore he is justified in expecting seven hundred ounces of gold per ton.

These statements, after due wrapping in the tinsel of high-sounding technical phrases, are served to the public through the daily press. The advertising artist spares no pains. He leaps from hyperbole to extravagance, from extravagance to nonsense. Beside his pyrotechnics, the cold and truthful estimate of a mining engineer looks appallingly flat. How long the public will continue to swallow the misstatements of the promoter we do not know. But we do know that the co-operation of every *bona fide* mining engineer, of all genuine mine operators, and of our technical educationists, is needed to educate the investors of Canada up to a point where they can distinguish the meretricious from the legitimate mining proposition.

EAST AND WEST

Could we acquire perspective by projecting ourselves into the future, and were we then to look back upon the past half decade, we would realize the tremendous import of our country's recent development. An added significance would then be given to the discovery of coal in the Western Provinces. The movement of population to the West, the re-population of the East by wisely controlled immigration, and the consequent readjustment of relations could be traced.

That the West will fulfil its rich promise of to-day, we do not doubt; but we believe, also, that the Maritime East will rehabilitate itself. Already it possesses every essential of natural prosperity. It suffers by contrast with the alluring West. But, all in all, the East is as rich in opportunity as is the West.

THE CHEMIST AND HIS OPPORTUNITIES

To-day the miner protects himself and cudgels operator and public with that most effective weapon, the strike. Elaborate and comprehensive labor organizations give the strike its efficacy.

No such weapon is in the hands of the technical chemist. After four college years—and three intervening summers of unremunerative toil—the chemist becomes an underpaid, overworked assistant in the laboratory of a metallurgical or mining plant. Here the deadening routine stultifies him, robs him of initiative. Conscientious and accurate work is expected of him. A mistake of his may cost his employers hundreds of dollars and him his position. He knows that many of the foremen on the plant get twice his pay and shoulder not a tithe of his responsibility. Also he is aware that cheap