

ANNUAL MEETING OF RAILWAY COMPANIES

F. S. Forest, general superintendent, and A. M. Thomas, secretary of the Red Mountain and Nelson & Fort Sheppard railroads, were in the city yesterday for the purpose of attending the statutory annual meetings of the two companies.

Messrs. Forest and Thomas held proxies for the shares and the meeting proceeded in a formal manner to elect last year's directors. The session took place at the office of MacNeill & Deacon, attorneys for both companies, and were purely of an informal nature. Since last year the head offices of the Red Mountain and Nelson & Fort Sheppard roads, both of which are Canadian companies, have been moved from Victoria, where they were located since organization, to Rossland and will be here in future. Yesterday's session was, therefore, the

first meeting of the companies in the Golden City.

Nothing has been heard of late regarding the proposal of the Red Mountain road to improve its depot facilities in Rossland. It will be remembered that last winter a scheme was outlined for the rearrangement of the yards here, the construction of a handsome brick passenger station and trainshed and of a commodious brick freight warehouse, with sections for the convenience of important shippers and importers. It was stated at that time that construction work would be commenced in all probability by June 1st, but something has apparently transpired to interfere with the plans to this effect. Rosslanders generally would be pleased to see the Red Mountain road follow the example of the Canadian Pacific in respect to improving its depot.

AT WORK ON ROCK CREEK FLUME

The city construction crew on the Rock creek flume line is now hard at work, under the direction of J. W. Wise, who has been appointed superintendent of the construction crew. The entire work is under the supervision of Major Van Bushirk, who will spend more or less of his time along the works.

The crew is now engaged in clearing the right-of-way for the flume. This right-of-way will be utilized for hauling lumber and supplies along the route, and actual construction will be started at the Rock creek end of the line. The grade made for the roadway will constitute the line for the flume, and the earth and other material from the banks on either side will be turned down over the completed flume to afford protection against falling timber, fire or frost. Two inch lumber is to be used in constructing the flume, and this will be delivered at the terminal of Blue & Deschamps' logging road, from where it will be transported by the city to the points along the line where it is needed.

Ten men are engaged under Mr. Wise on the axe gang and it is probable that

this number will be increased somewhat when work is started on the flume proper. By reason of the numerous applications for work on the crew the city was able to secure good men and it is expected that rapid progress will be made with construction.

The application that has been made by the Trail people for water rights out of Rock creek affects the city's interests somewhat, although the Trail supply will be taken off at the smelter dam, many miles below the point where the Rossland supply is taken. It is essential in the city's interests, however, that the priority of the Rossland record should be maintained, hence the action of the corporation in instructing the corporation counsel to attend on the hearing of the application. Trail desires to use this water for fire protection purposes and the smelter, it is understood, is willing to cede the right, but is barred because their record does not stipulate that the water may be utilized by the corporation of Trail. If Trail secures the record as asked for, the smelter will be in a position to allow the diversion of water from their dam.

OFFICIAL INSPECTION NOW UNDER WAY

A KOOTENAY MINE TO USE MULES

"When the price of lead stiffens up, as it undoubtedly will, the Ainsworth camp will come to the front," says Captain J. R. Gifford, general manager of the Hall Mines at Nelson. Captain Gifford is consulting engineer of the Highlander mine at Ainsworth, now regarded as one of the best developed and most promising lead mines in the Kootenays. The Highlander is operated principally by Philadelphia capitalists, and the fact that they have already expended \$160,000 in development work and are still engaged in opening up the mine is the best indication that they are satisfied with the outlook for their property.

The work on the Highlander has opened up an entirely new chapter in the history of the Ainsworth camp, which, by the way, is the pioneer lead producing centre in the entire Kootenays. Many years before any other section of the country produced lead ores Ainsworth was shipping to San Francisco, the trackless waste between the camp and the coast being covered, by boat and pack train. The enterprise manifested by the Highlander people has had the effect of placing the camp on an entirely different footing from that occupied up to a few months ago, and in other directions the exploitation of the Highlander promises to have an important bearing on the future of the section.

It is more or less familiar history that the management of the Highlander having opened up the upper workings of the mine and extracted therefrom considerable quantities of payable ore, determined to make a departure hitherto unparalleled in the history of the camp by dropping down from the 200 foot level to the 300 foot level and running a long drift in the face of the cliff for the purpose of tapping the ore bodies at greater depth than had been dreamed of prior to that juncture. The plan was put into effect and successfully carried out. On the start the tunnel was made eight feet square, the idea being to utilize this lower working as a means of reaching and developing the deep ore bodies of other properties adjoining. After some 200 feet had been made the tunnel was reduced to the ordinary size and continued for a total of 1000 feet, at which the main ore body was encountered. This carried

from five feet upward of concentrating ore with from one to two feet of clean galena on the footwall, carrying from forty to fifty ounces of silver and 60 per cent and upwards in lead. A drift was turned off and run for 500 feet on this vein. Then the main drift was continued for another 900 feet and work is still being continued with a view to opening up other known bodies. The vertical depth attained on the main ledge is 800 feet, while on the dip of the ore the depth is something over 1000 feet. Incidentally these low workings act as a drainage tunnel for the numerous surrounding propositions and the working of the latter will be substantially facilitated by the drawing off of the water through the Highlander workings. The prime importance of the work undertaken by the Highlander people from the standpoint of the camp as a whole is that the permanency of the ore bodies at Ainsworth, always a disputed point, is now demonstrated in the most practical manner, and this is certain to have its influence for the entire future.

The total distance from the present working face in the Highlander tunnels to the portal of the workings is 2800 feet, and the expense of transporting waste and ore through the tunnel has led Captain Gifford to recommend the management to use mule trains in the tunnel. This scheme was worked at the Silver King mine with excellent results, and is equally applicable to the Highlander. With the present facilities one man can barely handle a car of ore from the face to the portal, whereas one mule and driver can take eight such cars and handle them back and forward twice as rapidly as the men can.

The mine is equipped with a good concentrator and some ten tons of concentrates and clean ore is being shipped daily to the Hall smelter, which, fortunately, has three weeks' supply of fuel laid in and is therefore independent of the Fernie supply until the stock in hand is exhausted.

All that is required to make the Highlander and the Ainsworth camp generally the scene of marked activity is a profitable figure for lead. But this statement applies to the whole silver-lead district, and nothing has eventuated as yet to indicate that better prices are to be looked for at an early date.

HOW COAL TOWNS SPRING UP

SILVER HILL RE- SUMES SHIPMENTS

Shipments have been resumed from the Silver Hill mine on Crawford creek, owned by the London-Richelieu Consolidated Company of Rossland. Manager Henry Roy returned to the city yesterday from the mine, where he has spent the past few weeks superintending the repairs and improvements to the Crawford creek wagon road, which affords the mine a means of access to the lake front.

Mr. Roy was accompanied by his brother, George Roy, who has been identified with the Silver Hill for several years as superintendent. The latter will spend a day or two in the city. It will be remembered that the spring thaws brought down several slides that blocked the wagon road and the government put in a crew of men to make good the damage. This has now been completed and the mine is again in shape to resume shipping ore on its contract with the Canadian Smelting Works at Trail. The first load of ore

since the blockade was resumed has already been taken down to the lake front, where the transfer is made from wagons to barges. At both terminals of the aerial tramway connecting the mine with the wagon road, a distance of 10,000 feet, the ore bins are choked with ore ready to be taken over the road and as soon as this congestion is removed, which will be in the course of a day or two, the original working crew at the mine will be restored.

The Silver Hill people have worked out an excellent system of handling their ore. At the mine the ore is loaded on the tramway, which is operated by one man. Dumping at the terminal ore bins is done automatically and the wagons are loaded in a similar manner from the bins. At the lake front the wagons are dumped into bins by a neat automatic device, and the barges are loaded direct from the chutes in the bins, the conditions at that point on the bay admitting of this arrangement.

SEARCH FOR OIL IN EAST KOOTENAY

J. Fred Ritchie, P. L. S., and Ross Thompson of this city are in the Elk district looking into the possibilities of the section as an oil producing area. The outlook in this direction is said to be bright, and it is a matter of some surprise that the resources of the country in respect to oil have never been exploited.

In addition to its remarkable resources in silver-lead, iron, coal and other minerals there seems to be good reason to believe that at some time in the comparatively near future East Kootenay will come to the front as an oil country. The explanation for the lack of enterprise in the matter up to the present time is that given by the people resident in the neighborhood of the oil showings—that the Canadian Pacific has the oil lands corralled and will neither take action itself nor permit others to experiment on the ground. Naturally this policy will not always be adhered to, and when the oil lands

are opened up great results are looked for.

Some seven miles northwest of Elko, the bustling railroad construction town in East Kootenay, are found remarkable traces of oil deposits. At many places the oil can be taken from surface pools and ignited, while it is stated that the petroleum exists in such a pure condition in spots that it can be utilized in lamps without further refining. Geologists who have been over the ground state that the formation is such as to warrant the expectation that "gushers" will be found in abundance. The Alberta line is not far distant and in the territory various efforts have been made to develop oil showings existing there, but no reasonable successes have been achieved as yet. Whether or not East Kootenay will ever become a second Beaumont or not is an open question, but there seems to be no reason to doubt that it possesses many of the natural conditions that go to make up an important oil producing area.

and was reached immediately after luncheon on the second day. The attitude of the delegates with regard to it might be divided into three classes: First—Those representing the general public, who, from a lack of absolute

together with the best means of exploiting and developing them. In conclusion permit me to thank you for your confidence in appointing me as your representative, and also to congratulate your board on the earnest and well directed efforts they are putting forth

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