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What We Think.

At a special meeting of the Inland Board of Trade, held lately, a set of resolutions were sent from an East Kootenay Board for endorsement. Some of them were suggestions which do not come under the sphere of criticism of the Gazette, such as matters educational, etc. There are, however, one or two resolutions of the greatest importance, the bulk of which are left to a committee to report on. One was endorsed unanimously. It is a request to the Government to give an assurance that the taxation on the output of mines would not be increased. The occasion of this resolution is obvious to everyone. For the past twelve months the pulse of mining communities has beat very uneasily. Frightened by the hasty introduction of legislation affecting the management of mines, the capitalists have held aloof, consequently properties that should have been proved by now, are still in a doubtful stage. If, however, the Government will give an assurance that they will not seek to further increase the burdens the mines now have to carry, it will enable development work to be carried on with greater degree of assurance than can be done while there is a feeling of uncertainty as regards their intention. The resolution might, however, have gone a little further in suggesting a reduction of taxation for certain classes of property. At present the tax is

on the value of the ore at the dump, but in estimating the value no account is taken of the cost of production, which is so unequal. For instance, a 1 per cent. tax on the value of the ore is in some cases as much as a 20 per cent. profit on the profits of the mine, and in some cases actually eats up all the profit derived. Of course it is a pretty hard matter for the Government to determine what is or should be the actual cost of mining in every individual mine, but a rough schedule might be drawn up that would meet the case, and any mine owner who was not satisfied with it could be made to show good cause why it should not be carried into effect in the case of his particular mine; as is done with the question of assessments for farming or other property. It is of course the duty and the wish of every Government to build up the mining interests of the country, and when they find that the taxation is unduly heavy on certain classes of mining and in certain localities, so that the industry is retarded, they cannot but look into the matter seriously with a view to finding a remedy.

We most heartily endorse the suggestion that the office of Agent-General for British Columbia should be placed on a footing more commensurate with the vast interests of the province. In this connection we are enabled to speak with a thorough knowledge of the good which will accrue to British Columbia by a bolder though more expensive policy. As has often been alluded to in these columns, Mr. W. W. Clarke took a small display of local ores to Lon-