

Mines and Mining.

To the Editor:—The Kaslo Board of Trade by deputation and memorial, brought the matter before the Dominion government last winter, and we were strongly supported by boards of trade throughout the province; also by the Canadian Mining Institute and the Ottawa Board of Trade, by the press and many members of the parliament of Canada.

Our suggestions were that the lead should be treated in the tariff as manufactured goods and subjected to a duty of 30 per cent, instead of 15 per cent and 5 per cent, respectively, as now. That an act for the encouragement of silver-lead smelting by the payment of a bounty of 30 cents per ton upon ores treated, passed in 1895 and hitherto inoperative, should be amended, and made applicable to the refining, and not to the smelting of lead, and that it should be extended for a further term; and that a government commission should investigate and report upon the possibilities of a foreign market, other than that of the United States, for lead.

A decision in regard to our requests has been left by the government in abeyance pending the result of the Quebec conference. The Canadian commissioners to that conference have before them the full statements of the views of the leading mining interests upon the subject of reciprocity, and Mr. J. B. McArthur, president of the Hossford Board of Trade, is authorized to represent the Canadian commissioners in our behalf.

It can, we believe, be shown to be mutually advantageous that lead and all its products should be free of duty between the two countries, and it is this primarily that we are asking. There is no doubt that the lead schedule of the Dingley tariff was intended chiefly to check the entrance of Mexican lead—the product of phenomenally cheap labor—into the United States. This is illustrated by the fact that in 1897, notwithstanding the Dingley tariff was in effect after the 31st day of July, the importations of Mexican lead into the United States amounted to 60,000 tons, against 19,420 tons from Canada.

As the conditions under which lead is produced in British Columbia are not any more favorable than they are in the mining camps of the United States—the wages paid fully as high—the cost of mining greater, and as the total amount of lead at present produced equals only about one per cent of the consumption in the United States, it is not likely that our neighbors will see any great menace to their own industry in its free introduction in all forms.

On the other hand, we are pointing out that the Canadian market absorbs some 11,000 tons of lead per annum; that American capital, American machinery and American labor, skilled and unskilled, are freely admitted to share with our own in the profits of the mining business; and that the mining camps contiguous to the border furnish a large and acceptable market for the vast quantities of lead the United States produces. Moreover, the developments up to the present time indicate that the mines of the United States furnish a large and acceptable market for the vast quantities of lead the United States produces.

As a correspondent, "British Columbia," in the Globe suggests that our commissioners said to have the duty of 30 cents per ton upon bullion, which he wrongly states as 40, be reduced to the same rate as that levied upon ore, viz., 20 cents. We are asking to have the duty of 30 cents per ton upon bullion, which he wrongly states as 40, be reduced to the same rate as that levied upon ore, viz., 20 cents.

That the business of treating the ores at same should be promoted and protected by all legitimate means, we consider a sound business proposition, but that an additional burden in the form of a fine should be thrown upon the miner, in order to prevent him from selling it in the best market and to compel him to ship it to a home smelter, is a proposition which seems to think of the Quebec conference as an occurrence destined to be the precursor of commercial war and of a policy corrected.

We have been hoping from it the removal of artificial restrictions and the neighborhood trade barriers, and expecting that our Canadian commissioners, in return for some of the concessions which will be asked to make to American interests would be granted the same free admission into the United States of eastern products, such as fish, lumber and agricultural produce, but of silver-lead ores and unrefined bullion was not.

"British Columbia" has apparently listened to the romancing of the mining expert. The smelters of Kamloops and Okanogan cannot be running almost exclusively on Kootenay ore, for the total quantity shipped last year, 38,000 tons, would feed one 100-ton smelter for one year, and such a smelter would not employ thousands, but only 100 to 200 men. Again, the Pilot Bay smelter was operated not under the Dingley tariff, but under the Wilson tariff, which imposed a duty of 3-4 of one cent, per pound (\$15 per ton) upon lead in ore, and a duty of one cent upon lead in bullion (20 per cent).

Even under these comparatively favorable conditions, that particular experiment of smelting in British Columbia was successful, the fact being that other causes than the discriminatory duty against bullion led to its failure. It is not, however, the smelting of the Kootenay Lake look to see it in full blast at an early date.

We will all endorse the quoted estimate of Mr. Brown, that the "White-water" is yet to produce twenty-five million dollars' worth of ore, but not with an expenditure within the province of only one million. The Whitewater as a mine is a gem, but the reported dividend paid its owners for 1897 was only \$87,000, and the total dividends paid to date in the Sloan and Ainsworth mining divisions will probably not exceed four millions of dollars. By far the larger portion of our galena ores are of that grade where the margin of profit left above working expenses is but narrow, and slight recedences—such as that introduced in the proposal of an export duty of \$12.50 per ton upon ore—would shut down many places, and create a commercial distress without doing anything to accomplish the object in view.

Our total production of silver-lead ores last year, 1897, was only 38,000 tons, which averaged almost exactly 50 per cent lead. The values were—\$8,544,125 worth of lead at \$8.58, \$1,290,517, and 5,472,971 ounces silver at \$5.98, \$32,272,836; total, \$4,063,353. This quantity of ore, as I have shown, would furnish the fuel for one smelter, and this ore is of a class that from a smelting man's point of view can only be smelted—without a large admixture of "dry" ore—at a great waste and sacrifice of economy. What is necessary as a foundation for successful lead smelting in British Columbia is that there should be a much larger production of ore than at present. This can only be secured by the operation of more mines and the development of more prospective. Deposits of low grade mines, notably those in the Ainsworth camp, are now idle—dozens of prospects are left unworked because the net returns after deducting present rates of freight, duty and

treatment are too small to afford any profit. An export duty of 5-8 of one cent per pound upon lead would simply intensify the present evil—drive more mines into discouragement, and postpone the date at which the volume of production would assume such proportions that capital would be naturally attracted to the business of smelting, refining and manufacturing our lead it home.

G. O. BUCHANAN.

Kaslo, B. C.

The Le Roi Deal Closed.

The Turner faction of the Le Roi company has agreed to dispose of the stock held by its members to the British American Corporation at a price of \$8.125, while others assert with equal confidence that the figure is \$8.25. The price met the approval of Governor Mackintosh, who cabled to London his recommendation that the deal be closed. It is confidently predicted by those on the Turner side that a deal will be consummated to-morrow or Tuesday at latest, and that the ownership of the mine will finally be vested in the big London syndicate. There were smiles on the faces of the Turner faction yesterday in consequence of the receipt of the good news, which was really too good to keep.—Spokane Spokesman-Review.

Grand Forks.

The Prospecting Syndicate of British Columbia has bonded the Jewel in Looz Lake camp, an English syndicate, Messrs. McParlane & Mahon of Vancouver, made the deal. The purchasers have set aside \$25,000 for immediate development work, already over 600 feet of work has been done on the Jewel, and much valuable mining machinery was sold with the mine. George H. Sutherland, managing man here, has been given authority for the statement that Dr. C. Beach, the owner of the famous Cracker Jack mine at Christina Lake has discovered a large body of copper ore on one of his properties assaying 53 per cent copper. This is the highest copper assay ever made from Christina Lake ores.

The owners of the City of Paris and Lincoln properties in White's camp, have started to run a 600-foot tunnel which will be commenced at the end of No. 1 tunnel and strike the ledge at a depth of over 400 feet. It will take six months to complete this tunnel.

Greenwood Camp.

Twenty thousand dollars is the amount expended by the British Columbia Copper Company in the Mother Lode in the past three months. This expenditure represents a power house 3000 ft., equipped with two 90-horsepower pumps, 10 duplex drill-sinks, a compressor, an electric light plant, a hoist for 600 feet, a sinking and station pump, a hoisting house, office and many minor improvements which together make up a complete plant for the economical working of a most promising property. The property is situated in Deadwood gulch, the mines west of Greenwood City. The property was located in 1891, and after passing through the hands of several owners, it became the property of the British Columbia Copper Company, a corporation composed of New York capitalists. Their large expenditure in prospecting and in tunneling to ascertain the width of the ledge. After going in about 40 feet they struck a wall which they called the "Mother Lode." From this they excavated mineral which assayed \$10 to \$12 to \$40 in copper and gold.

To their surprise the ore body continued for nearly 200 feet, and they then struck another well defined wall. This prospecting tunnel only gained about 100 feet in depth, but this was a revelation. The ledge was found to sink a mine in 150 feet, to a depth of 100 feet, all the way through ore, when water drove them out. They then put machinery and improvements first mentioned, and are now engaged in sinking a shaft which is to be 500 feet in depth, and will drift every 100 feet both ways. The shaft is a double compartment, each compartment being five by four feet, and is being timbered with 12x12 square timber, and when 20 or 300 feet deep, the shaft will be put in. The Canadian Pacific railway survey runs within 200 feet of this working shaft, and one has to be careful not to be run over. This company paid \$21,000 for the property, which included the Mother Lode, Primrose and two small fractions. They had expended \$300,000 in tunnels and shafts up to the time they put in machinery, and present improvements at a cost of \$2,000 more, and it is estimated another \$40,000 will be put out, making an expenditure of \$100,000 before the company ships a car of ore.

The Cassiar Country.

F. S. Lack, a Denver mining engineer, who has been prospecting through the Cassiar country for the Cassiar Central Realty Company, has returned. As a result of his examination, Mr. Lack is satisfied that the mines do exist, though as to their richness he is yet in doubt. The country he found seemed with large veins of ore, possibly of great value. Out of this he cannot be certain until the veins are better made out. The number of samples brought out from the wilderness. No free milling gold ores were found. Many of them appear to be concentrating, but in all probability most of the samples are of smelting ores. Mr. Lack is thoroughly familiar with the mines of the United States, Mexico and Canada, and thinks the ores of Cassiar country approximate those of the Rossland, B. C. district more nearly than any other. He has a good knowledge of the country, and is not likely to be wrong in saying Mr. Lack does not wish it understood that the two districts are in the same mineral belt, inasmuch as there are many dissimilarities in the ores, and the two are at least 1,000 miles apart.

The best prospects found by Mr. Lack were over the great divide of the Rockies and near the boundary line between British Columbia and the Northwest Territories, at least 1,000 miles north of Seattle. They will take, perhaps, seven years, Mr. Lack thinks, to thoroughly prospect the Cassiar mining country. The Cassiar Realty Company will go ahead and build a railway as projected, in order to facilitate the prospecting. To aid the company in this, the British Columbia government has made to it a concession of 750,000 acres of mineral lands, to be selected in one block from the territory between the 128th and the Northwest 128th and 132nd meridians east and west. All the mines to be developed will be quartz propositions; it is well known that the Cassiar places are almost all quartz, and now almost wholly worked out. His expectation encountered many hardships, and men less accustomed to the trials of the frontier would have failed entirely in the task, but Mr. Lack's party came through without accident of any kind. Not only were the 25 men safe and sound when they returned to civilization, but the 25 mules and five saddle horses belonging to the expedition also came back in good condition. Most of the country travelled over was a vast bog, covered with heavy underbrush and timber. In places the men were unable to make land travel impossible and the men and animals made their way along by

wading up and down the streams, sometimes almost swimming them. In the possession of Mr. Lack and Mr. Houston are a large number of photographs taken by the present expedition, showing the difficulties encountered. One is of the little pack train wading down Quartz creek. The little packs are in the water nearly to their eyes. A large number of the negatives obtained on the latter part of the trip were destroyed by light getting to them, to the regret of the explorers.

Fish and game they found abundant. The streams, large and small, were fairly alive with white trout; salmon were at any expense for an artificial fly. Mr. Lack says he never saw such fishing in his life, and he is something of an enthusiast on angling too. Mr. Houston caught three seven-pound trout with a fly, and Mr. Lack caught two. The trout, the fish being unwilling to bite and fresh meat a necessity. Large and small game abundant. There were moose and sheep and goats, and hundreds of the grouse family. There were few tams that the explorers were compelled to take for their own use, except for the moose. The moose were easy victims, but the bears were more difficult to kill. One great drawback to the pleasure of the expedition was the lack of a good trail, which came in swarms to welcome the newcomers almost as they are said to do in Alaska. The lack expedition left Grand Forks on the 23rd of September, Fort Wrangle and up the Stikine river. There the expedition was divided into two parties, the first party, consisting of Mr. Lack, Mr. Houston, J. C. Frazer, Mr. Lee and W. D. Sprunt, went on northward, leaving Dease river and going to the head waters of the Stikine river. Down this stream the Big Glycerine was reached. From the Big Glycerine the party went to State creek, next to Poorman and Snow creeks, and finally south again to Spring creek. From this stream the party struck for the eastward, Party No. 2, consisting of Mr. Lack, Mr. Houston, J. C. Frazer, Mr. Lee and W. D. Sprunt, went on northward, leaving Dease river and going to the head waters of the Stikine river. Down this stream the Big Glycerine was reached. From the Big Glycerine the party went to State creek, next to Poorman and Snow creeks, and finally south again to Spring creek. From this stream the party struck for the eastward, Party No. 2, consisting of Mr. Lack, Mr. Houston, J. C. Frazer, Mr. Lee and W. D. 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