

BUILDING STONES, ROOFING SLATES, etc., have been materially reduced.

On the part of the United States there has been a reduction of 5 cents in the duty on IRON ORE, making the present tariff 10 cents per ton.

As regards round and run-of-mine BITUMINOUS COAL, the Canadian duty has been brought down from 53 cents per short ton to 45 cents per short ton, as against the standing American duty of 45 cents per long ton.

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If, as will probably be the case, these changes crystallize into actuality, then the mining industry of Canada will have received a strong stimulus. It will be noticed that amongst other minerals, gypsum, feldspar, fluorspar, and talc, both crude and ground, except in the case of gypsum, where only crude is admitted free in the United States, although both crude and ground are admitted here, are now reciprocally free. This means much to all of Eastern Canada, and will probably affect favourably Alberta and British Columbia. We regret, of course, that both ground and calcined gypsum have not been placed upon the free list. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, with their enormous reserves of high grade gypsum, would have benefitted largely. But even the removal of the duty on crude will be of service.

As for feldspar, talc, and fluorspar, the commercial possibility of handling these minerals has been definitely enlarged. Feldspar mining is growing in importance every day. Apparently we possess the best and largest deposits on the continent, and there appears to be no reason why we should not curtail at once the shipment of crude and become shippers of ground feldspar.

The revision also provides an added outlet for our manufactured talc. The situation as regards mica and asbestos is improved. Fluorspar, mentioned above, is not yet mined in Canada, largely because of the very limited market and because of tariff inequalities. Now that these inequalities have been levelled, we shall hope to see two or more promising prospects developed.

As coke has been made reciprocally free, we shall expect a decided enlargement in the western output. Railroad tariffs are the controlling factor here. But any incidental amelioration of present conditions will be welcomed.

The whole question of mutual concessions in coal duties is too complicated to be discussed briefly here. We shall take this subject up at a later date. We may, however, remark here that this is at once the most vital and the most comprehensive topic of all.

In the main, we feel inclined to congratulate Canada's delegates upon having secured a fair quid pro quo. Canada is justly looked upon as the immediate source of raw material. Canada wishes to be looked upon more and more as the source of commercial products. The whole meaning of the tariff, or of any revision of the tariff, so far as Canada is concerned,

lies in the opportunities afforded to establish manufacturing and milling plants on this side of the International Border.

#### THE BELLEVUE VERDICT.

The coroner's inquest into the cause of the death of 31 men in the Bellevue colliery on December 9th, has resulted in a formal verdict attributing the fatalities to carbon monoxide poisoning. This verdict, dealing solely with proximate facts, is of little significance. The five riders attached to the verdict are much more important. They are put in the form of recommendations and read as follows:—

- "1. That more inspectors be appointed.
- "2. That a Draeger apparatus station be established in this district.
- "3. That telephones be established in underground workings under the supervision of the chief inspector wherever practical.
- "4. That a thorough investigation be made of means of preventing loss of miners by cave-in in mines.
- "5. We consider that negligence is in evidence on the part of operators and miners in the carrying out of the Coal Mines Act, and we would most strongly recommend a stricter adherence to the intent of the Act."

The first three riders are part and parcel of a necessary general movement. Inspection of coal mines in Alberta is casual, rather than systematic. Even if it were thorough, the means are lacking to make it effective. To be effective, inspection must be supplemented by rigidly enforced regulations. And, most assuredly, there must be a sufficient number of well paid officials appointed to cover the whole territory.

We are informed that, contrary to the recommendations of the manufacturer, the Draeger apparatus installed at Hosmer, B.C., which were hastily called into requisition after this Albertan disaster, were fitted only with 30-minute cylinders. The person or persons responsible for this gross error should be made to suffer. The modern respiratory apparatus is designed to supply oxygen to the user for approximately two hours. This by the way.

As pointed out in a former editorial, prevention through inspection and control of mining methods, explosives, lighting, and ventilation is the one prime necessity. Breathing-apparatus outfits are excellent accessories. But they cannot do more than supplement the work of complete inspectorial control. Mine telephones are also admirable and necessary devices. They also must be considered as units in a well organized system. No one device is a cure-all.

The last rider indicates that in the opinion of the coroner's jury there was evidence of carelessness on the part of operators and miners alike in carrying out the requirements of the Coal Mines Act, and strongly urges a stricter adherence to the intent of that Act.