

The other alternative is to leave employees and employed perfect freedom of action to arrange their relations as at present, and in case of failure to do so, equal freedom to strike or lock out, as the case may be. But to affix upon the one party taking action of this kind actual and heavy responsibility for loss or damage sustained by the other in accordance with well recognised principles of law which regulate the civil relations of individuals. We hardly venture to hazard an opinion upon one of the most intricate and delicate of modern problems. But it would certainly appear as though the latter course were more in harmony with that development of law which has preserved the civil liberty of the individual without permitting it to degenerate into the licence to worry other individuals with impunity.

There can be no more satisfactory indication of the broad and solid foundation upon which the mining industry is being established in British Columbia, than is afforded by the amount of capital which it is contemplated to sink in the establishment and equipment of smelters within the boundaries of the Province. An individual mine here and there may at one time have a large supply of ore at hand, and at another, have its reserves depleted and its shipments interrupted. But a smelter depends for its existence upon a steady and continuous supply of ore. Unless that is guaranteed by the condition of the mines and district it is intended to serve the capital is not usually forthcoming to insure its construction. Without considering the increase in capacity both at the Granby smelter and at the Greenwood smelter, we find that, at the present time, no fewer than five new smelters are mooted in British Columbia. We would be far from committing ourselves to the opinion that all of these smelters will be immediately placed under construction, but this we will say, that there is not one of the projects which has not a certain amount of legitimate justification derived from the condition and prospects of the mining industry.

It is now a foregone conclusion that a copper smelter will be erected at some convenient point on Vancouver Island which will have the ore of the Lenora mine at Mount Sicker as its base of supply. In addition to the Lenora with its steady output of from 60 to 80 tons a day of first-class ore, and its possible average mine run, were a smelter convenient, of over 100 tons a day, the Tyee and Hayes mines have now reached the shipping stage, while the Marble bay properties are shipping an average of 1000 tons a month. There is not any doubt that the Coast mines can now supply a steady supply of ore for a copper furnace of moderate capacity apart altogether from the contemplated developments at Howe Sound, which will provide a problem in local treatment peculiar to themselves.

For the Boundary country two new smelters are contemplated, one in connection with the Snowshoe mine and one in connection with the Brooklyn and Stem-

winder mines. The necessity and justification for these plants arise from the fact that all the great mines in the Boundary country can make an important saving in smelting profits by having their own plants, while the self-fluxing character of the ore does away with many of the difficulties encountered in operating a smelter in connection with an individual mine. Therefore the re-duplication of copper furnaces in the Boundary district is only a question of the development of tonnage. It has also been decided to put a lead smelter in operation in East Kootenay. East Kootenay possesses all the requisites for a successful smelting industry in a more marked degree than any other portion of the Province. It is quite evident that a lead stack is not only justified in East Kootenay, but by affording a ready market for the output of less developed mines will have an important effect in forwarding the development of the district.

Some discussion has also arisen respecting the opportunity for a smelter on Slocan lake. We have frequently referred to the very satisfactory progress of the mines tributary to Slocan lake and particularly of the remarkable development of the dry ore belt which is becoming an important contributor to the mineral output of the Province. But it is doubtful whether there is a sufficiently large and steady tonnage to keep a smelter in operation, and with regard to dry ores it is doubtful whether the premium offered by outside smelters is not more than sufficient to offset any advantages to be gained by treating them within the limits of the district in which they are produced.

However, not to include a smelter on Slocan lake, where there is certainly great activity and progress in mining, how can it be reasonably maintained that the mining industry of British Columbia is in any true sense in a decadent or backward condition in view of the contemplated industrial developments which we have here outlined?

The recent enquiry concerning iron properties in British Columbia on the part of capital or its representatives is not without significance. In our last issue we referred to the purchase in August, by a Montreal syndicate, of extensive hematite occurrences near Kitchener, and again this month we have to record a considerable transaction of a similar nature. The existence of large bodies of hematite ore near Bull river, in the Fort Steele Mining Division of East Kootenay, has long been known, but the claims were not staked off until April last, probably on the very obvious grounds that the property was not considered marketable. In fact, with one exception no iron properties as such were located in the interior of the Province until this year, although on Vancouver island and the Mainland coast the potential value of the large iron occurrences discovered was earlier appreciated. The areas at Bull river, which are now under bond for a consideration of \$120,000 to a capitalist of Butte, Montana, comprise several claims through which the deposit has been traced, and it is es-