

## THE SILVER INDUSTRY

The producers of silver have experienced considerable difficulty in disposing of the metal during the past few weeks. For some days the outlook was very discouraging; but the situation is now much better. London is taking silver at a higher price than before the war and shipments have been resumed. It is understood that the English mint is buying large quantities and it is expected also that the United States Government will buy several million ounces.

The market is, however, a limited one and buyers are afraid to commit themselves. The Cobalt district mines have suffered in consequence. Some have been closed down. Some are being operated with reduced forces. Some are producing as before.

The uncertainty has made it difficult for the producers and buyers to agree on prices. Consequently the companies find it advisable to await developments. Most of them will continue to produce silver, while a few have ceased operations.

In some cases shutting down is necessary. In other cases it is a doubtful expedient. Companies having a good cash surplus owe it to their employees and to the country to continue operations if it can be done at no great loss. To throw men out of work at this time is particularly regrettable.

It is quite conceivable that a company might eventually make a few dollars more for its shareholders by stopping operations until the market improves. It is to be hoped, however, that an endeavor will be made to keep the mines open even at the risk of slight losses. If over-production is feared more attention might be devoted to exploration and development. There is unfortunately an overly abundant supply of labor just now. Some companies are in a position to use it to advantage.

The application of the Temiskaming mine managers to the Dominion Government for aid in marketing silver has been promptly answered by an announcement that the banks are now ready to advance 30 cents an ounce on silver bullion deposited with them. This will enable the producers to keep their employees at work during the period of uncertainty.

## DEPUTY MINISTER OF MINES RESIGNS

According to an Ottawa despatch Mr. R. W. Brock, Deputy Minister of Mines, has resigned to accept a position as head of the Department of Mines in the University of British Columbia.

Mr. Brock is well known in the western Province where he worked when employed as a field geologist by the Geological Survey. His experience at Ottawa as Director of the Geological Survey and during the last year as Deputy Minister of Mines makes him unusually well qualified as an executive head. His earlier experience as Professor in Geology at the School of Mining, Kingston, and as a geologist on the staff of the Geological Survey will also stand him in good stead. His work in the mining districts of British Columbia has made

him especially familiar with the conditions there. The new university is fortunate indeed in securing the services of Mr. Brock.

## GOLD MINING

The war has called attention to the fact that gold mining has some very distinct advantages over the mining of other metals. At ordinary times the fixed price and constant demand for gold have enabled mining men to make more definite valuation of gold deposits than of other orebodies. Instead of figuring in ounces it is possible to figure in dollars. Knowing costs of mining and treating the ore and the amount of ore the value may be determined. For other metals an additional variable, price, must be constantly kept in mind. Gold mining is an especially sound industry in times like the present. The market for many other metals produced in America is poor, but gold is in great demand.

A rather unfortunate circumstance is the fact that we do not in Canada produce all the necessary materials for the treatment of gold ores. Cyanide ordinarily is obtained from Germany. One producer in Great Britain is said to be able to supply large quantities, but this will doubtless find its way to the Rand. The establishment of a manufacturing plant here or in the United States is greatly to be desired.

With a good supply of chemicals on hand the gold mines may be expected to break records this winter. Some companies, however, are likely to be embarrassed if new supplies are not soon available.

## TRADING IN MINING STOCKS

With the announcement that war had been declared by Austria on Servia, holders of mining stocks, like holders of most other stocks, suffered severe losses. Prices dropped quickly, and a general panic threatened. Very prompt action on the part of the directors of the Canadian exchanges checked the selling.

On July 28th the Toronto Standard Stock and Mining Exchange was closed. There was therefore considerable interest shown when on Monday, August 24th, the exchange was opened for cash trading. The experiment is considered as being fairly successful. Holders who are pressed for money have an opportunity of selling. Investment hunters are given an opportunity. Protection against bear raiding has been provided for by fixing for each stock a minimum price, below which no sales are permitted.

The small offerings indicate that holders are of the opinion that Porcupine and Cobalt stocks will not suffer as badly as many industrial stocks during the war.

Transactions in New York indicate that the war is expected to interfere with copper mining for some time. A very large percentage of the copper produced in America is exported and ordinarily the greater part of it is consumed in Germany. This market being lost the value of copper stocks has appreciably decreased. The trading reflects the condition.