

THE HAMSTEAD MINE FIRE.

All coal-mine operators will welcome Mr. F. W. Gray's article on the use of breathing apparatus at the Hamstead mine fire.

We are not overstating the case when we say that Mr. Gray deserves the warmest praise for the efficient and practical manner in which he is taking up the subject of rescue work.

The press reports of this disaster have been incomplete and misleading. Mr. Gray's clear analysis of the circumstance is therefore timely and welcome.

It will be seen that there is no just cause for dissatisfaction with the rescue apparatus used. Also, Mr. Gray makes it evident that it is of the utmost importance that each colliery should possess its own complement of respirators and should keep a thoroughly trained corps of selected men. Both men and apparatus must be ready for instant service.

There is inspiration in the heroism of Thorne, one of the Tankersley Station men, who made repeated descents into the mine in the vain hope of saving the lives of others. His example is all the more profitable when it is known that he had trained unremittingly and had become thoroughly accustomed to the use of the Draeger helmet.

SPANISH.

Many of the graduates of Canadian mining colleges have had cause to regret their ignorance of Spanish.

A prominent and successful mining engineer residing in Mexico, has recently suggested to us that Spanish should be made a compulsory subject in the course mapped out for mining students. Since our correspondent is himself a Canadian and a graduate of a Canadian college where Spanish is not included in the mining course, he speaks with knowledge and feeling.

In our own experience we have known of numerous instances where young mining engineers were unable to accept positions in Mexico and other Spanish-American countries, simply because of their ignorance of the language. In all other respects they were amply qualified.

The mining engineer is the truest cosmopolite. To him neither the pink tea nor any other social futility should appeal. His country is that in which his work lies. It may be Siberia or the Yukon or Peru. But Canadian mining engineers, if they do not find work in Canada, are much more likely to look for it (and find it) in Mexico than anywhere else. Our correspondent's suggestion is therefore in accordance with the dictates of common horse-sense.

A VALUABLE REPORT.

Mr. A. A. Cole, mining engineer to the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway Commission, has compiled and published a report on the Cobalt district for the year 1907.

In addition to conveniently tabulated figures of production, much useful information concerning the various smelters is included. Canadian, United States and European smelting rates and schedules are given in full. The flow-sheets of five concentrating plants are reproduced graphically.

Altogether Mr. Cole's report is interesting and valuable.

It will require the passage of but very few years to increase vastly the difficulty of finding out certain facts about the early history of Cobalt. A clear record of conditions published now is worth reams of dubious speculations some time hence. Both from a thoroughly practical and from a sentimental point of view, it is well to write history while events are yet warm in the memory.

The mining public should be grateful to the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Commission and to Mr. Cole.

OFFICIAL BULLETINS.

The British Columbia Bureau of Mines has commenced issuing official bulletins. It is no longer necessary to await the publication of the annual report to get information concerning new districts or important work in old districts. Bulletin No. 1, by Mr. W. Fleet Robertson, Provincial Mineralogist, describes the mineral locations on Moresby Island. Here, incidentally, is situated the Ikeda mine, owned and operated by the Japanese firm of Awaya, Ikeda and Company of Vancouver.

We wish to commend to the attention of the mining departments of other provinces, this departure from established routine. As we have pointed out many times, timely bulletins are infinitely to be preferred to the bulky and belated annual reports.

Editorial Notes.

News notes, photographs and enquiries from our readers are always welcomed. Our news columns could be greatly enhanced in value if readers would advise us from time to time of happenings in mining circles. Canada is a large country.

Mr. Courtenay De Kalb, well known in Ontario, has accepted the position of associate editor of the *Mining and Scientific Press* of San Francisco. For some years, Mr. De Kalb occupied the chair of mining and metallurgy at the School of Mining, Kingston. He was also Inspector of Mines for the province of Ontario.

Mr. De Kalb is a mining engineer of wide experience. He has contributed many articles to technical papers. As a writer he is incisive and polished. We congratulate our western contemporary upon this important addition to its staff.