

gard to the economic operation of the mine, the shareholders present at the meeting in confirming the policy outlined by the directorate were no doubt influenced by these considerations. Under the circumstances, the decision arrived at was doubtless the correct one, for if the option on the adjoining claims were allowed to expire, it is probable that in view of the recent satisfactory developments in the Tyeec mine, the property could only be secured later at a much increased, if not altogether prohibitory price. Meanwhile at no distant date, judging from present indications, the Tyeec will be in a position to commence a regular production of high-grade copper ore, sufficient to enable the company to earn very substantial profits.

In a recent leading article on the subject of British Columbian mining, *The Mining World and Engineering Record* of London refers to the ignorance prevalent in England of conditions in this Province and in the Yukon, and ascribes this lack of knowledge to the backwardness of the Canadian authorities in supplying, at frequent and regular intervals, general and statistical information upon which due appreciation of the mineral resources of these territories might be based. Our contemporary proceeds, pertinently enough, to remark that

"While voluminous annual reports are issued by the British Columbia Government, usually long after they have ceased to possess any current interest, monthly facts and figures of the kind supplied by the Australian colonies, for example, are conspicuous by their absence. When the vote for the establishment of the Agent-General's office in London was recently discussed in the British Columbia legislature, a representative of one of the mining constituencies complained of the lethargy of the Government in keeping the potentialities of the Province before investors, and the Minister of Mines, in reply, is reported to have stated that the Government was sending out circulars every month. If this is a fact it would be interesting to know to whom the circulars are being sent, for they have certainly not reached the London Stock Exchange, or the people who have largely interested themselves in British Columbian operations. It is much to be hoped that the existing Government, which appears to have the interests of the mining industry at heart, will at once initiate and carry out such a policy of frank publicity as will enable investors to ascertain authoritatively what is really taking place in the mineral development of the Province."

We can reassure *The Mining World and Engineering Record* on one point. The B. C. Government is not "sending out circulars" of the character described. But it may interest our contemporary to learn that preliminary steps have been taken. Mine owners and operators are now nominally compelled by law to make regular monthly returns of output and values. Laws may, however, be made with impunity, it is another matter to enforce them. Owing to this difference, the statistical bulletins, which would have had the effect of advertising in the most convincing manner possible the satisfactory recent development and growth of the mining industry of British Columbia, have not been issued. The British press should not be impatient. Such an attitude is indecorous to a degree. In Western Canada we are content to recognise the delight of anticipation, and among other things look forward to being officially informed in June or July of next year that during the early summer of 1901 there was a strike at Rossland. In order that no ill consequences may follow from the

too sudden dissemination of information so startling, the public will be first prepared by the Education Department who will confide to it the intelligence that Queen Anne is dead.

The strike situation at Rossland does not appear to have undergone any material modification during the last month. It is not easy to declare with any certainty either the ultimate issues involved or the progress of the struggle. There appears to be an inclination in some quarters to interpret the Rossland struggle as an advance guard action between the forces of mining capital and trades unionism as such in the mining industry in British Columbia. But this would give an extended significance to the strike which we hardly think it warrants. Doubtless, should the Miners' Union meet with a reverse at Rossland it will be apt to weigh the cost of all its actions very carefully in the future, and in this sense of the strike probably has an important bearing upon the industry as a whole and upon possible future labour disputes in the Province. But that there is contained in it the nucleus of a movement to wage war on unionism as such in British Columbia we can hardly credit. Such a struggle if carried out to the bitter end would practically destroy all the capital invested in British Columbia mines and would lead to years of industrial anarchy. It would certainly seem to be as contrary to the interests of the mine owners as it would be hostile to the spirit of the age.

The struggle is being carried on with spirited reprisals on both sides. The penalties enforced against two of the striking miners have been followed by convictions obtained for breaches of the Alien Labour Act, and these again by suits for damages entered against the various unions engaged in the strike. These things really point to a new and hopeful feature in connection with labour disputes. People are becoming alive to the great waste and loss occasioned by labour disputes; they are beginning to realize that it may be possible to affix a legal responsibility for this waste and loss upon one side or the other, as well as merely to discuss the question of moral responsibility. In these civil actions we see a certain rudimentary effort to bring labour disputes within the regulating influence of universally admitted principles of law. That being so, there never was a crisis when the purity of our courts and the trust and confidence in them by all classes of the people were likely to afford a greater service to the well being of our society.

Practically there are two divergent lines along which labour disputes may be brought under the domain of law. One of these is to erect courts of jurisdiction to sit upon and decide such questions between capital and labour as may be brought before them. This is the direction which labour legislation has taken in New Zealand. It has obvious advantages in that it aims to prevent strikes altogether, but it has equally obvious disadvantages in that it brings all the details of industry into a continuous cycle of litigation.