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THE MONTH.

The second annual Convention of the Provincial Mining Association is convened for the week commencing Monday, February 22nd, in Victoria. The Association since it was organized a year ago, has accomplished a great deal of useful work, and is capable of doing much more. Enthusiasm, therefore, should not be allowed to flag, and it is to be hoped that the district organizations will realize the importance of being well represented at the forthcoming Convention.

We are glad to note that the immigration of coal miners to British Columbia from the North of England continues, and the men find ready employment in the East Kootenay collieries. It will be an excellent thing for the Province if we can man our collieries with intelligent British miners, instead of being obliged to employ ignorant, non-English speaking Huns, Poles and Dagos, representing the sweepings of Europe in work where intelligence is a *sine qua non*, having regard to the safety of human life.

It will doubtless be some little time before the significance of the new discoveries of ore in the 1350-foot level of the Le Roi is fully determined. But the potential importance of recent developments may be to some extent gauged by the published statements of the manager, who is not given to overmuch optimism of

view. Whatever the future of the Le Roi may be, and whether it will again come to be regarded as the premier mine of British Columbia, it is at any rate certain that its management is now in very safe hands, and if the ore is there Mr. Parrish may be depended upon to find and develop it to the best possible advantage.

The future of British Columbia depends on the growth and development of the mining industry. Mining is already conceded to be our premier industry, while agriculture takes and must continue to take a very secondary place. Yet year after year the Provincial Government appropriates a considerable sum in the aggregate in support of a Fruit Growers' Association, a Dairymen's Association, a Flockmasters' Association, Agricultural Societies and the British Columbia Agricultural Association. No grant has ever been made to promote or aid a Mining Association of any description. The Provincial Mining Association has already proved its efficiency and usefulness. It is, however, handicapped and hampered for want of funds. It has therefore a strong claim on the Government for financial assistance and encouragement.

The shareholders of the Velvet and Portland Companies have acted very wisely in approving of the proposed scheme of amalgamation. From every point of view the plan is a sensible one. The two properties adjoin and can consequently be worked together to advantage; management expenses will be correspondingly reduced; and the plan contemplates a considerable reduction in the issued capital of the Velvet and Portland Companies. Although in the past the development of the Velvet was not always wisely directed, the result of work more recently done was most gratifying. The Portland, too, is a most promising property. Mines in this section have been heretofore badly handicapped by heavy transportation costs, but the drawback in this respect should be largely overcome by the erection, as proposed, of reduction works on the spot. There is therefore every prospect under the new regime of the Velvet becoming like one or two other British-administered mining companies operating in the Province whose positions have lately been strengthened or improved, a profitable enterprise.

In a letter to the MINING RECORD, Mr. Rowland Machin points out the hardships imposed on prospectors and others by the regulations now in force prohibiting carriage of blasting powder, caps and explosives in general on the steamers plying between the Coast cities and northern mining camps, as well as on vessels navigating Kootenay inland waters. Thus a mine operator (say) at Whitehorse sending an order