jurious incidence of taxation, and extensive swindling on the part of company promoters.

With the exception of one, these matters must be largely left to right themselves. As the boomed shares shrink those who buy them at the lower price will make money and change their attitude towards the country, and as investors find out that the Province is not a Tom Tiddler's ground they will insist on a prudent and economical management, while it is to be hoped that a generation of more business-like promoters will succeed to the first exploiters of our resources.

Legislation has it in its power to remedy the effects of injurious taxation, and also by insisting upon full information of the working of our mines to limit, to some extent, the depredations of the wild-cat promoter. It is quite absurd that in a country so rich as British Columbia, any doubt should be felt as to the ultimate outcome. We must face the problems raised by the present condition of the mining industry in a free and open spirit. Nor will it be long before lost ground will be recovered, provided we go about to recover and not to lose more. We have, however, remarked that the immediate outlook is not hopeful. This is true in the sense that, perhaps, for the next two or three years the inflow of fresh capital will be restricted. But the interim will afford a breathing space in which now unproductive and only partially profitable undertakings will become productive and profitable. It will be a period of active development. Then, later, conditions will be more perfectly comprehended, the opportunities for investment will both appear and be more favourable, a repetition of the fatal mistakes which have been committed in the past will be less likely. While the common sense of the legislator will have had a sufficient opportunity for assertion in remedying the more gross defects of the present mining law and taxation systems. When this time arrives the mining industry of British Columbia will have entered on the really important stage of its career, which must eventually bear to a condition of unprecedented prosperity.

IS CHEAP LABOUR COSTLY.

A MOST interesting and valuable article appears in the Denver *Mining Reporter*, under the head of "Costly Cheap Labour," which is inspired by the action recently taken by the Rhodesian Legislature to encourage the immigration of Chinese into Rhodesia. The Rhodesians have been induced to take this step not out of love of Chinese but because no white labour can be induced to enter Rhodesia and work alongside of African labour, and of African labour there is not enough procurable to supply the demand. This has led the *Mining Reporter* to make certain comparisons between Colorado and Rhodesia for the reproduction of which no apology is necessary :—

"The Rhodesian gold output amounted last year to a little less than two million dollars. It is, however, growing fast, and might be assumed to be at present at about $200,000 per month. To produce this requires, according to the official figures, the labour of 7,000 native miners, taking no account of the white bosses, foremen, mill hands, superintendents, managers and office employees. This corresponds to a production of $28.50 per month per individual, or $342 per year. Now compare this with the results attained in the United States, where free white labour does the work. In Colorado, where the metallic output last year was $56,250,000, the entire population of the mining districts—men, women, children, merchants, professional men and office employees—was 70,000, which corresponds to an output per capita (of population and not of workers) of over $800. In Arizona the average results were even higher In no part of the West were they much less.

"From these figures it would look as if cheap labour, like cheap everything else, did not pay in mining at least. And if one makes a comparison of the various mineral regions of the world it is not difficult to show that net profits under slave or semi-slave labour are nowhere anything like as large as they are under high-priced and free labour, even though gross production may increase and become very large. In Russia, Germany and Spain, where mining labour is free but miserably paid, the industry is languishing. In Australia and Mexico, where wages are lower than in the United States, there is nothing like the life and push and snap to the industry that one finds with us, and in parts of our own country where, through over population or other causes, labour is not so well paid as it used to be. there are indications of industrial decadence, either existing or approaching.

"In fact, few of the wise 'sayings' that have come down to us from the past are truer than the one which insists that 'the labourer is worthy of his hire.' Any system which disregards this fundamental policy will probably have to pay directly or indirectly for the disregard of human rights. The Rhodesian and Transvaal ores average from $8 to $12 per ton in gold values, and the industry seems in danger of collapse because operators have difficulty in obtaining labour at 50 cents per day. Transport these regions and their deposits to the Western United States and they could be made to pay handsomely with $3 wages. At the Homestake mine in the Black Hills, and the Treadwell in Alaska (where, it is true, the ore body is vastly larger), magnificent profits are resulting from $2 to $4 ore, under $3.50 wages, and there are hundreds of deposits in the West no wider and just as difficult of access or extraction as those of India and Africa, where full wages ($3) are paid, and handsome dividends continually accrue. What is the reason?"

The point of view occupied by the *Mining Reporter* is interesting and to a large extent borne out by the history of different countries and different industries. We have only to look at the industrial development of the Southern States since the incubus of slave labour was removed and still more at the industrial and commercial supremacy of Great Britain and the United States which may be taken as types of dear labour countries to find very strong support for the general proposition maintained by the *Mining Reporter*. The particular comparison instituted between Rhodesia and Colorado, however, is of very little value. The average return *per caput* of the labour employed in Rhodesia is $342 a year