

It is a notable feature of the strike that the men who quit work have, according to the mine managers, never made any request for change in working conditions or wages. It is generally reported that the men want an eight-hour day and a minimum wage; but they have not yet asked for it.

The reason for the remarkable condition of affairs is that the men are on strike at the order of officers of the Western Federation. These officers asked that the mine managers recognize them as representatives of the miners. The mine managers refused to do so, giving as reasons the past record of the Federation and the fact that the officers of the Federation do not properly represent the miners; but only such miners as they have induced to join the union. The officers claim that a large percentage of the employees are members of the union. The operators claim that a large majority are not members, and have no desire to be considered such or to be represented by the union officers.

Believing this to be the case, the managers have reopened the mines and taken back such employees as wish to work. There has as yet been no attempt to bring in large numbers of new men, though a few are now at work.

As is usual, the men going to work have been subjected to much abuse from the strikers. For weeks attempts were made every morning to prevent the miners from going to work. Encounters were frequent and serious riots were prevented only by the activity of the soldiers and deputies. On September 20 the companies applied for and were granted an injunction intended to stop such practices.

In order to settle the strike, investigations are being carried on by both State and Federal Governments. Numerous plans have been proposed; but none yet found acceptable. The union men state that what they want is recognition as representatives of the employees. The mine managers say that they will never recognize them as such. Hence they say that proposals of arbitration are not to be considered, for there is nothing to arbitrate.

In order to break the deadlock, if possible, the Copper Country Commercial Club, an organization of business men of the district, has appointed a committee of three members to offer its services to both employer and employee with a view toward the resumption of work at all of the mines.

At present it seems unlikely that there will be any settlement of the dispute between the Western Federation and the mine managers. It is possible, however, that the strikers and their former employers may come to terms if they can be brought together.

### CANADIAN NICKEL CORPORATION'S SMELTER

It is understood that the nickel company organized by Dr. F. S. Pearson and associates has taken over the property of the Dominion Nickel Company in the Sudbury district. For some time the work at these properties was carried on vigorously by the former

owners; but lately there has been less activity. A smelting plant has been designed, but it is not yet erected. The financial stringency is supposedly the reason for the postponement.

In Mr. Gray's article, part of which appears in this issue, he quotes from a memorandum prepared by the promoters, in which the smelting plant is spoken of as though already in existence. There were no signs of it two weeks ago, and we doubt whether it has been erected since that time.

### CONDITIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

As the third quarter of the year draws to a close, the condition of the metal mining industry of the province continues generally satisfactory. While few, if any, new mines have this year added substantially to the total of ore production, there has not been a decrease in output of the mining districts from which the chief supplies of ore are obtained. In a general way this is true of all parts of the province that have in recent years contributed to the total quantity of ore produced. Several individual instances of a reduction of output are known, but these do not include mines that have made a large production; on the other hand, there are other cases where there has already been an increase or where ore will shortly be mined to an amount that will more than offset decreases. With lode mining generally productive, and placer mining giving promise of larger results than were obtained during any of the last three or four years, there appears to exist good reason for satisfaction. Indeed, it is hoped that metal mining will show a sufficiently large increase to, in considerable measure, compensate for the loss in total production that labour troubles at coal mines have caused.

### ASBESTOS MINING IN QUEBEC

The world's chief source of asbestos is the district known as the Eastern Townships in the Province of Quebec. This district shipped in 1912 111,175 tons of asbestos, valued at \$3,059,084, an average of \$27.52 per ton. There was mined during the year 1,870,608 tons of rock. Wages amounting to \$1,377,444 were paid to the 2,910 men employed.

During 1912 the shipments exceeded the production of the mills, and the stock on hand was reduced from 33,751 to 24,176 tons. During the present year business has been very good, and the industry is generally reported to be in better condition than it has been for some time. A few years ago the industry received a setback as the result of overcapitalization and questionable dealings in stock. The mines and mills were pushed and a large production made at a time when the market would not absorb the mineral. Soon the buyers become aware that stocks were accumulating. The price fell, and many of the mines and mills were forced to close. Conditions have now happily changed for the better. Elsewhere in this issue will be found the report of Theo. Denis, Superintendent of mines of Quebec, on Asbestos in 1912.