

Mining News.

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MINERALS VS. AGRICULTURE.

Dr. Selwyn was hardly encouraging or complimentary to the mining industries of Canada, in his address at the meeting of the Mining Institute. He claims that Canada is essentially a "pastoral and agricultural country; in these regards she shows a constant increase; in her mining she shows a decrease. This is inevitable."

According to the Statistical Year Book prepared by Mr. George Johnston, whose word in this line is acknowledged as most reliable, the "number of mines in the Dominion more than doubled in the ten years"—that is in the census years of 1887 and 1891. And the annual average production of minerals rose from \$12,583,332 in the biennial period of 1883-8 to \$22,500,000 in 1895. The only mineral of moment that shows any decrease in this period is phosphate, and for this the reason lies entirely outside of Canada. Copper has more than doubled; lead has increased from \$12,229 in 1880-8 to \$749,965 in 1895. Silver, (even with the drop in value), from \$317,932 to \$1,158,633; and many others show great increase.

The table of "exports from Canada" also shows a great increase in produce of the mine, as the total value in 1838 was \$1,276,129 while in 1895 it was \$6,981,550; while the total exports of agricultural products in 1838 were \$12,871,655 against only \$15,719,128 in 1895, a very small increase, as compared with that of the mines. Even adding the animal and agricultural products, which have increased from \$28,590,183 to \$41,280,937, the increase is not nearly so large proportionately as that of the mines.

Taking these figures, it seems hard to understand why Dr. Selwyn should take such a pessimistic view of the outlook of the mining industry. If the exports have increased to five times the amount in 27 years, while the pastoral and agricultural exports have not quite increased by one-half in the same time, it looks very much as if mining were gaining ground in Canada. And it is quite safe to say that the returns of 1896 will show a tremendous increase over those of last year.

SPLENDID EVIDENCE.

Our esteemed contemporary, *La Presse*, has decided that the mines of Rosslard are a fraud, and that all the brokers who are endeavoring to sell such shares to the public are heartless swindlers. And in a recent issue, as if its own statements on the subject might not absolutely convince the public, it prints a letter from a workingman who left Montreal for Rosslard, expecting to find a fortune waiting for him to pick up. This anonymous correspondent, however, has found so many others as equally wise as himself, that he finds not only no fortune, but no work. Consequently, he decries Rosslard, says it is a fraud; and that every mine—save *Le Roi*—is a humbug.

Such evidence to *La Presse*, is conclusive. A disappointed workingman, who presumably is utterly ignorant of mining, is better able to judge of and report on Rosslard than all the mining engineers, Government experts, shrewd investors and able journalists, that have visited it!

What fools must all the men be who have put money into the mines there; men who have erected smelters for ore that will come to them; railway companies that have built tracks to a place with one mine! What unprincipled men all these brokers must be, and how unreliable is every newspaper in Canada—except *La Presse*! Come to think of it, this is the first time that our heavy investors have ever got so badly taken in—some of our biggest men in Montreal and Toronto!

But we can only admire the courage of *La Presse*! Single-handed it defies the whole evidence of miners, engineers, railway men, Government experts, and states, emphatically, that Rosslard is a myth! And, for evidence, offers the letter of a workingman who did not know enough to keep away from a mountain mining camp in the dead of winter.

When shares in *Le Roi*—the only mine—were selling at 15 cents, *La Presse* should have warned its readers against buying such fraudulent stock. That is only two years ago. Perhaps in another two years—or less—*La Presse* will be quoting as big an advance in Rosslard shares that are today selling at the same price as *Le Roi* once did.

PROTECTING THE COLLIERIES.

The opinion of employees and employed in the coal mines of Nova Scotia appears to be unanimously in favor of continuing the present duties on coal. The statement of the Hon. R. Drummond, puts the position very strongly, and he makes two exceedingly telling points. The first is that coal, which is so difficult and expensive to obtain, ought not to be classed as "raw material." The second is that the oil producers of Ontario are protected to the extent of 150 per cent. As the Nova Scotia collieries employ directly 6,000 men, any change that would affect them, should be most seriously considered.

THE MINING INSTITUTE.

The annual meetings of the Canadian Mining Institute which took place in Montreal last week, were of more than usual interest. The awakening of a spirit of enterprise in mining that is evident over the whole Dominion, naturally calls more prominent attention to such meetings and mining men themselves are stimulated by the public interest in their specialty. His Excellency Lord Aberdeen gracefully recognized the national importance of the meetings by being present at the sessions, as well as at the banquet. This is but another evidence of his desire to aid everything that will advance the interests of the Dominion over which he presides, even if it be outside his regular routine and state duties.

The list of papers served to show the varied interests which are included in the Institute and covered many phases of the mining industry in Canada. They were freely discussed and valuable information was often added by members who were specially posted on the subject.

Many regrets were expressed at the unavoidable absence of the President of the Quebec Association, Captain R. C. Adams, who is away in England on business. In selecting his successor, Mr. George E. Drummond, the Association has chosen a gentleman who is personally well able to fill the position and who is well qualified for it by his business interests in mining in the Province.

A WATER MINE.

A report from British Columbia says that a "water" mine is being operated about 20 miles from Ashcroft, the water being impregnated with copper in sufficient quantities to make the precipitation pay. The mine was accidentally discovered by the loss of an axe, which dropped into the stream and was only recovered next year, when it was found to be covered with pure copper. This, following the nearly fatal poisoning of some men who drank from the stream showed what the water contained in solution. Now, the stream will be worked for its copper.

This may seem a remarkable and almost incredible story, but it is not the first mine of this kind. The man who first suggested utilizing the water flowing from the Anaconda and St. Lawrence mines in Butte, Mont., and who obtained the right of recovering the copper held in solution, netted \$60,000 a year from his discovery. Now the Mining Company works the process and estimates the net revenue from this source as \$15,000 per month.

The fact is that the copper in solution is much more easily recovered than the solid ore contained in rock, besides requiring no expense for mining. So great is the difference in cost that 2 per cent. of copper in water pays better than 20 per cent. of copper in rock.