

to sell at a modest price a really promising mine property. In this respect it is generally asserted that American capitalists interested in mining compare favorably with British promoting intermediaries, taken as a class. However, as the heading of these comments of ours indicates, we admit that so far as it goes, the quoted criticism of the British Columbia Review is very largely accurate.

### VANCOUVER'S SMELTING PROJECT.

The City Council of the City of Vancouver has, subject to the necessary confirmation of its action by the many by-law voters, agreed to accept the smelter offer of the Rothschild Syndicate, of London, England. Hence, if the latter succeed in their endeavor to establish for smelting business purposes a bona fide joint stock company in London, based on English lines and capitalised in an adequate sum, probably representing at least £250,000, the City purposes to take stock in the concern to an extent equivalent to \$65,000, or about £13,200. The stock to be subscribed by the City constitutes a modest proportion of the total necessary capital of a big smelter company, but its chief value to the promoters doubtless consists in the fact that it pledges a great and growing commercial community to aid to the utmost of its ability in its corporate capacity as a municipality, the metallurgic undertaking which it is now proposed to establish.

The city is in one respect acting more wisely than in like, if larger, cases does either the Provincial or the Dominion government, in that the aid which it is to accord a business enterprise that should prove of great value to the community, as also of profit to its participants, is conditional on a pro rata participation, on safe lines of strictly limited liability, in the gains of the enterprise. There is accordingly secured a direct monetary "quid pro quo," public assistance being given on strictly business terms that should prove of mutual advantage.

It is, however, morally incumbent on the civic authorities—this being also a necessary safeguard of the proposed municipal investment—to ascertain that when the joint stock company in which Vancouver is to participate, is placed before the British investor, it shall not be on lines of excessive capitalisation or other wrongful con-

ditions, jeopardising either reasonable dividend earning capacity or successful management, though the projectors of the enterprise may rightly be treated as prospective earners of a reasonable profit return for their work in making useful and necessary preliminary contracts and other arrangements in connection with the proposed company. This is of course a matter of some delicacy which calls for careful consideration on business lines, involving the taking of broad and reasonable views of the interests of all parties.

Subject to this, there is much to be said in favor of the proposed agreement, provided that it duly results in the establishment of a 300 ton smelter on Burrard Inlet, at a point fairly beyond but not too far beyond the city limits. If to the proposed smelter a small refinery be added as intended, so much the better.

It is well for the industry to be located beyond the city at some point of little present cultivation and small population in view of the probability that however carefully managed the smelter may be, its fumes may prove somewhat harmful to neighboring vegetation and surrounding residential amenity. Such drawbacks are more or less inevitable present accompaniments of large manufacturing extension, but it is just as well that their effects upon the pleasantness of residential life in favored Vancouver be for a time at least minimised, especially as haply some day in the not distant future, improved chemical and mechanical skill may wholly solve the problem of noxious smoke and fume prevention.

And though the smelter will doubtless be placed beyond the city, yet within the legally necessary five mile radius, it should prove, for most practical purposes, as profitable to Vancouver as if its site were found within the city, since it can easily be so placed as to make the concern and its workers subsidiary to and dependent on Vancouver for supplies and otherwise.

It is true that the motive power and some of the other appliances proposed to be used in the works are somewhat novel in their proposed application to ore smelting, but as the care of this matter is stated to be placed in the very capable hands of Messrs. Bewicke, Moreing & Co., the eminent mechanical engineers, we are of opinion that cheap and efficient methods are practically certain of choice.

It may also be urged as an objection to the general principle that the smelter offers a greater