

# The Rossland Miner.

C. A. GREGG, President and Managing Editor.



## THE STRIKE.

The present above all other occasions is a time for calm, dispassionate thought. We shall attempt in this article an absolutely fair presentation of the main features of the deplorable situation with which Rossland is confronted. It may be said in all truthfulness in the first place that it was with a feeling akin to relief that the announcement that a strike of the miners working in this camp had been decided upon was received by all classes yesterday morning. Anything is better than uncertainty. And now we all know the worst. The storm has burst. For upwards of three years the community has been living in dread of just such occurrences as that which has taken place.

It would be folly to attempt to disguise the fact that the situation is a very grave one. A crisis has arisen, the outcome of which will make or mar Rossland for many years. It is the duty of each individual interested to attempt to get at the facts of the case and place the blame where it belongs. Unless this is done there will be no remedy. Either one of the two parties to the controversy—the employers or the employed—is responsible for precipitating the present conflict. And it is a very grave offence which has been committed. It may spell ruin to many. It means discomfort and perhaps misery for hundreds.

It hardly requires to be stated that no one denies the right of men to quit work at any time they choose to take such action, and for any reasons which may seem sufficient to them. That is a privilege which is given to all men who dwell in lands which pretend to observe the principles of civilization. It is also not to be disputed that employers have the right to accept or reject any demands made upon them respecting conditions upon which they shall furnish employment.

With that in mind, it is important that we should inquire if there are any elements in the present crisis which tend to create the impression, that there has been a perversion of those principles—that is to say, an immoral use of inalienable privileges. We think we are stating the case accurately when we say that such an impression does exist. It is undeniably true that many men who are idle today are in that position in opposition to their personal wishes. It is the conviction of many people, indeed, that a large majority of those who yesterday quit work are opposed to a strike. Not only are they opposed to the strike, but they disapprove—at least many of them do—of the method by which the strike was brought about.

This is certainly a most serious condition of affairs; and it devolves upon us to enquire why such should be the case. We think it may be taken as a certainty that the chief reason why the order to strike was obeyed was because of a fear in the minds of the men that the term "scab" would be applied to them if they refused to obey the mandate which has precipitated this deplorable conflict. Then again they undoubtedly wished to be true to the principles of unionism. Such an attitude cannot be viewed otherwise than with respect and admiration, however much we deplore the circumstances which placed them in that position.

Now, bearing in mind that it is undoubtedly true that a great many of the men who are on strike have no special grievance, let us make an attempt to judge of the justness of the reasons which actuated the minority in determining upon a strike. In official notices sent out by the Union it is stated "This strike is in sympathy with the smelters' strike at Northport, and for \$3 per day for shovellers and car men and to adjust other grievances."

We will first deal with the question of wages, premising our remarks on this particular point with an expression of belief that men are on all occasions justified in attempting to get as high a rate of wages as they can, consistent with reason. From information at our disposal this morning, rather hurriedly gathered, but nevertheless accurate, we learn that

**IN MOST OF THE MINING CAMPS IN WESTERN AMERICA THE STANDARD RATE OF WAGES PAID EMPLOYEES IN METALLIFEROUS MINES IS \$3 PER DAY, THE WESTERN FEDERATION OF MINERS HAVING FORCED THE SAME RATE OF WAGES TO BE PAID TO MUCKERS AS TO THE HIGHEST SKILLED MINERS.**

**IN CERTAIN PARTS OF COLORADO ALL CLASSES OF UNDERGROUND WORKERS ARE PAID \$2.50 PER DAY, AND 10 HOURS.**

**IN CERTAIN OTHER PORTIONS OF COLORADO THE WAGES ARE \$3 AND EIGHT HOURS.**

**IN CALIFORNIA, OVER A GREAT PART, THE WAGES ARE \$2.50 AND 10 HOURS.**

**IN BUTTE THE WAGES ARE \$3.50 FOR ALL UNDERGROUND WORKERS, AND EIGHT HOURS.**

**IN THE COEUR D'ALENES THE WAGES ARE \$3.50 AND 10 HOURS.**

**THE WAGES PAID TO THE MINERS OF ROSSLAND AVERAGE \$4.25 FOR SKILLED AND \$2.50 FOR UNSKILLED, EIGHT HOURS.**

We believe those figures to be correct, and that they are calculated to induce many people to the belief that there is little ground or just cause for complaint on the score of inadequate payment to the miners of Rossland. However, that is a matter of opinion.

Now, regarding Northport. What is the situation at that point, and are the miners of Rossland justified in going on strike in sympathy?

The position of the men who are on strike at Northport is, briefly, that a determined attempt is being made to break up the union, basing this contention on an alleged utterance by Manager Kadish. The smelter management, on the other hand, contend that the only point at issue is that they shall be permitted to say whom they shall employ and whom they shall discharge at any time, without any dictation on the part of the Union. Mr. Bernard MacDonald, in a letter published in the Rossland Miner a short time ago, pointed out, over his own signature, that there was no quarrel with the union as a body, his position simply being that the company would submit to no dictation and would insist upon the discharge of 20 or 25 men who had made themselves obnoxious by their threats and agitation. He furthermore said that with the exception of those 25 or 30 men all the rest could return back to work at once. There is no dispute whatever regarding the question of wages or hours of labor. We respectfully submit that the position of the smelter management is not an unfair one.

In the foregoing we have attempted to set forth the respective positions of the two parties to the controversy on the main points in dispute; and we ask all who read these lines to attempt to arrive at a verdict as to who is in the right and who is in the wrong.

Of one thing there cannot be the least shadow of a doubt—the mine managers will not retreat from their position. They believe they are not warranted in making the concessions asked for and cite arguments in support of their position which ought to appeal to the intelligence of all fair-minded men as very convincing.

In conclusion, we may say that we have here attempted in all sincerity to lay a fair, dispassionate estimate of the situation before our readers. We have done this in the hope that they may be able to arrive at a just judgment in the matter and place the blame where it belongs. We believe it to be the bounden duty of every resident in this city to take an interest in this matter. Nothing can be clearer to thoughtful minds than that a question is going to be decided which will mean either progress or stagnation for Rossland.

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Tyranny has triumphed in the past; and if it triumphs again it will be a sorry day for this city and for this section of the province.

Rossland is either going to be handed over to the care and guidance of the agitator or it is not.

That is the issue.

## A FRAUDULENT STRIKE

The strike ordered by the Rossland Miners' Union was fraudulently brought about.

The provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws governing actions of the Union were disregarded.

An illegitimate demand was made upon the men to quit work.

That is the finding of an impartial jury. That jury was made up of the members of the Rossland Board of Trade, which had no other purpose in view than to lend whatever aid was possible towards bringing about a fair, equitable settlement of the trouble.

The verdict is based upon indisputable evidence, as will be seen by a perusal of the letter forwarded to the executive of the Miners' Union which appears in another column.

There can no longer be the least shadow of a doubt that the strike is almost entirely due to the work of the professional agitator and not in response to the wishes of a majority of the members of the union.

A fair ballot must be taken or the union will completely alienate public support and sympathy and stand convicted before the eyes of the world as a party to a fraudulent and unjustifiable stoppage of work.

There can be no escaping that conclusion.

The executive of the Miners' Union may refuse to discuss the finding of the committee of the Board of Trade.

They may deny that there has been an exposure of illegitimate methods.

But the charge is proven up to the hilt. It is proven and supported by no less an authority than the Constitution of the Western Federation of Miners.

Which do the miners of Rossland propose to stand by—the Constitution or the Agitator?

The Constitution was either intended to be observed or it was not. If it was intended to be observed, why not observe it?

The miners who find themselves out of employment as a result of the order to strike should ascertain if the right to take such action was legitimately obtained by the executive.

Is that not a fair proposition?

A proper ballot should be insisted upon by the men themselves.

If that be refused the action of the union should be repudiated by the men and they should return to work.

They could not be called scabs if they did.

AND THEY WOULD RECEIVE THE SUPPORT AND SYMPATHY OF THE ENTIRE PEOPLE.

## THE SITUATION.

It is, perhaps, true that about all that is required to be stated by a newspaper has been said regarding the various phases of the strike affecting the mines of the Rossland district. There cannot be the slightest doubt in the mind of any person who has followed the trend of events as to what are the true issues in the present controversy. During the period when the clouds which foreshadowed the coming of the storm were gathering, and since the storm burst, the Rossland Miner has been strenuously endeavoring to do its duty to the community in which it is published. It has day after day presented arguments which, it thinks, ought to appeal to the intelligence of fair-minded men. Appreciating the vital importance to Rossland and this section of the province of the outcome of the situation, it has labored unceasingly at the task of endeavoring to stimulate public sentiment up to the point where an expression of opinion would be given which might be taken as a verdict for or against either of the contestants in a controversy which imperils the future of Rossland. It did that because it was a newspaper. It did that because it believes that the weight of public opinion ought always to be directed against those responsible for the creation of a condition of affairs which affects disastrously the interests of the public. It presented the case fairly. It opened its columns to both the contending parties with equal liberality. It published the official statement of the position of the Rossland Miners' Union and it printed statements elicited from the mine managers. It did that because it was desirous of laying such facts before its readers as would permit of an impartial and just judgment being arrived at.

A body representative of the public sentiment in Rossland has made a pronouncement in the matter. That body is the Rossland Board of Trade. And the result of an impartial investigation by that body into the circumstances under which the strike was brought about is a citation of evidence that it was illegally ordered.

We think there are few who will be induced to dispute the reasonableness of the contention that the letter which contained the finding of the Rossland Board of Trade, which was sent to the executive of the Miners' Union, demands a reply from those who were responsible for ordering the strike. So far the charge that the vote was an illegal one according to the provisions of the constitution of the Western Federation of Miners has not been replied to. Until a reply is made there will be excellent reason for supposing that the charge is true.

However, that is a matter for individual opinion, and particularly for the judgment of the members of the Miners' Union. We have endeavored to be absolutely fair in dealing with the controversy as far as it has proceeded. We have contended—and we contend now—that it ought to be established that the strike has been ordered in consequence of a test being made of the opinion of the members of the Miners' Union in accordance with the provisions of the constitution governing their deliberations. Until that point has been disposed of one way or the other, all other phases of the situation do not merit discussion.

It may be argued that the miners who find themselves out of employment know their own business and that we have nothing to do with anything concerning them in this matter. That argument must fall in the face of the official statement issued by the executive board of the Union which contains a clause which reads: "We ask the moral aid and support of the many diverse bodies making the general public of this city." Such an utterance is clearly an invitation to take an interest in the controversy and arrive at some judgment.

But, as we remarked in opening this article, about all has been said that requires to be said regarding the different phases of the controversy at the present juncture. The people of Rossland are in possession of the facts; and it is to the people of Rossland that the Miner owes a duty which it thinks it has honestly performed. Whatever their judgment—if the judgment be expressed—it may be awaited by the Rossland Miner with the greatest confidence that the part it has played is not dishonestly and fairly open to censure.

## THE MANIPULATED VOTE.

The exposure of the fact that the miners' strike was ordered on three-fourths of the votes cast instead of three-fourths of the total membership has increased the dissatisfaction among members of the union.

Bitter complaints are made of the illegal action of the leaders and of the fact that conservative members were not given a fair notification and opportunity to vote. Over one-half the members had no chance to vote at all.

The leaders are trying to force every one into line, but indignant remarks are heard all over town, and the feeling seems to be growing. It is hoped that it will soon be strong enough to demand a new ballot on the question.

Nothing less than this will enable the leaders to clear their names from the charges of fraud and illegal action now heard in every quarter.

## CANADA'S FINANCES.]

The predictions made by Finance Minister Fielding in his budget speech, with respect to the probable outcome of the financial transactions of the year which has just been closed, are likely to be verified. According to additional information which is now at hand regarding the revenue and expenditure for the fiscal year 1900-1 the revenue on account of the consolidated fund was \$80,753,948, the ordinary expenditure \$38,574,508, and the capital expenditure \$9,556,169. This statement, however, does not contain all the moneys which were paid into the treasury in the shape of ordinary revenues during the last fiscal year, nor all the disbursements which were made. It is simply a statement of the receipts and expenditures of which the Finance Department is cognizant up to the evening of the 30th of June. Before the accounts are finally closed many thousands of dollars, received or disbursed in the last month of the year, but not reported at the Finance Department until after the issue of the interim financial statement, will be added to each side of the ledger. Between the accounts as made up on the 30th of June of each year and the accounts as they appear when the books are closed a month or two later, there is always a material difference. For example, on June 30th, 1900, the revenue was returned as \$49,034,597, but the sum was swelled by later receipts to \$61,029,994. In the same way the expenditure was given at the same date as \$34,826,401, but when all the accounts were in it proved to be \$42,975,279. The capital expenditure was also stated at \$7,799,467, but the correct sum was \$9,742,187. Taking it for granted that the ratio of increase between the financial statement as revealed on June 30th last and as disclosed when all the accounts are in will be the same last year as in the year preceding, the result will be very nearly as Mr. Fielding figured it on March 14th. The revenue on consolidated account will amount to \$82,800,000, and the expenditure to \$48,700,000, giving a surplus of \$34,100,000. Mr. Fielding's estimate was that the surplus would be about \$6,350,000. The capital expenditure still remains to be reckoned with. The Finance Minister assumed that it would be \$10,000,000 and deducting from this the surplus and sinking fund, he anticipated a slight addition of \$1,800,000 to the public debt. Mr. Fielding is probably a little under the mark in his estimate of the capital expenditure, as on June 30th it had already reached \$9,556,169. Accepting this production, however, as correct, there must be placed against the capital expenditure a surplus amounting to \$6,100,000 and sinking funds amounting to \$2,400,000, leaving the small sum of \$2,200,000 to be added to the public debt. The ordinary revenue according to the figures obtainable is \$1,701,350 ahead of last year. The expenditure also increased by \$3,784,108. Deducting the increase of expenditure, it leaves a net growth in the outlay of ordinary expenditure of \$2,047,758. The figures for the year show an increase from all the accustomed sources of revenue. Customs gives an advance of only \$35,248 over the year preceding, but the tariff reduction of 33 1-3 per cent on British imports accounts for this seemingly small showing. Excise gives the handsome increase of \$477,524; postage, \$258,636; public works, \$328,915; and miscellaneous, \$400,977.

## WHAT THE STRIKE ACCOMPLISHES.

We may appropriately reproduce in our editorial columns the following article, which appears in a recent issue of the Tacoma Ledger: The people of this country are in sympathy with the wage-earner, because they are all wage-earners. The proportion of them who do not strive for bread is too small to be considered. This proportion embraces, by rough classification, the tramp, who is not always to blame, and the idle rich, also often to be held blameless, having in many instances been born to money and not to brains. Eliminating these, the nation is a collection of wage-earners. Not every man toils with his hands, but there must be those who perform intellectual work far more arduous and ill-requited. These are wage-earners just the same, and they have in mind always the eternal principle that the laborer is worthy of his hire. Therefore, when they hear of a strike they believe there must have been some basis for it; some wrong to be adjusted, hardship imposed and rebelled against. Recently there has been a great strike. It is fair to say the general public had scant knowledge of the reason for it, save the general discontent due to the spectacle of great corporations paying dividends on wind and water. The strike is over, and the public curiosity is as to what it accomplished. So far as may be judged from the outside, it accomplished nothing of good. It may have inconvenienced contractors, causing them to default on their obligations, but where did it put a dollar into the pocket of the workman? How did it lighten his burden? In what manner cheer him on his way? The plain truth is that a strike is generally a mistake, and brings nothing but evil. That it is often without good cause is shown by the circumstance that it usually occurs at a time when work is plenty and wages good. It is more apt to be an expression of mere discontent than the demand for equitable relations. Often it is stirred up by a class known as "walking delegates," thriving on turmoil, and capable of doing injury so great that the granting of some trifling concession is a poor offset. The strike just ended caused thousands of workmen to lose hundreds of thousands in wages. It caused them to expend their savings, perhaps to rely upon charity. And there was nothing gained. Suppose the employers, angered at the interruption which made their establishments idle, had refused to resume operations. The workmen would have been face to face with want. If there is a lesson in the matter, it is not to strike until there is something about which to strike.

## THE BOARD OF TRADE LETTER.

Mr. J. B. Johnson, president of the Rossland Board of Trade, has published the following letter:

July 14th, 1901. I desire as president of the Rossland Board of Trade, to repudiate the construction placed by the Rossland Miner on the letter of this board to the secretary of the miners' union, which was published with wholly unauthorized head lines by the Miner in Sunday's issue. And I especially desire to point out that the Rossland Board of Trade has never intimated that the strike resolution was carried by fraud or by fraudulent intent, but by a misinterpretation of a clause in the constitution of the Western Federation of Miners.

Yours truly, J. B. JOHNSON. It was unnecessary for Mr. Johnson to "repudiate the construction placed by the Rossland Miner" on the letter which was forwarded by the board of trade to the secretary of the Miners' Union; it was also unnecessary for him to state that the letter was published with "wholly unauthorized headlines." No newspaper would on any occasion seek to evade entire responsibility for its treatment of an item of news. Surely Mr. Johnson does not require to be told that the "construction" which a newspaper chooses to put upon any circumstance or event is one entirely of its own selection! Mr. Johnson says the letter appeared with wholly unauthorized headlines. True; and will Mr. Johnson kindly inform us under what circumstance the letter could appear with authorized headlines, except as a paid advertisement? It is the duty of an editor to interpret each item of news in such a way as may appear to his mind as proper and with appropriate headings. That is all which was done in this case. The letter in question was not communicated officially to the executive of the Miners' Union through the medium of the Miner. We presume it was sent by mail and that the recipients of it will interpret its meaning from the copy which they receive in such fashion.

The Rossland Miner chose to put its own interpretation upon the verdict of the committee of the Rossland Board of Trade. Surely Mr. Johnson will not take the position that it had no right to do so? Had it not the same right to do so as any private individual?

## MINES AND STRIKE

### No New Deaths Regarding Strike

### Incorrect Rumors of Accidents at Northport

### Reports were given

Today ends the first strike in the Rossland district this morning the Rossland Great V came down the hill on the next day by Eagle and Centre Streets has passed rapidly and no lack of rumors and them of the most start out exception the see have been manufactured and the only fact the shadow of a doubt the strike is still in full effort to arrange matters of work at the Northport. The officials of the state that the smelter prosecution of the on stand point are in go they art confident of The mine managers' statement as to them. All the big mines are including the offices. They are connected with staffs, mechanical and not interfered with. In the camp today a New St. Elmo, I. X. Homestake. The week will approximate early days, and the month commencing with out will only represent ordinary amount of for the past two or more.

### NORTHPORT

Reports were given day to the effect that at the Northport smelter was blown up, and was a trouble which was in the way etc. Some of these reports are the most generally credited. enquiry at the office here and was told were entirely founded was No. 5 furnace destroyed that it yesterday by putting the amount of 400 to also denies the statement. Mr. Shed in his speech the effect that there reports are that the well and the plant is torly.

A Northport despatch in the Spokesman following description: A new town is being smelter company purchased, which extends to the city limits of several cottages houses and three built ready complete be built About 30 in one of the board and the men seemed contented Kadish said that a new working in the ment proper, which of over 200 including by the contractors. ready will accommodate when completed about for.

In parting Mr. Kadish back in six months know the place. The company has a tion to the caliche strike has been in now one of the best belonging to the com 500 feet in size and C'Have furnaces and as many more in p tion, 20 men are en this department.

In pointing out tments, on every he diech said: "In you would not know ever been a strike." mill with a capacity has just been instal says that there was on hand at the roast and he estimated the 118,000 tons. Contr grading new roast make the total ca It is almost impossi of the immense amo hand in the roast acres of it. Some c as it comes from the already roasted show spectrum. Hinge bins contain of tons of coke and, that there is coke smelter on almost ev St. Paul and North In the blast room operation with a ca to 310 tons per day of these blast furn been repaired and ed since the strike res. Mr. Kadish more blast furnaces within the next we is on the ground, p will give the plant a 1,700 tons of raw or of one of the larges country. The new c installed. The floors and many other imp ing made.