

SMELTER TRUST PUTS ON SCREWS.

Coeur d'Alene Mineowners Will Build Smelters.

The smelting trust has suddenly stiffened its demands upon the mine owners of the Coeur d'Alenes. The conference that has been held in New York has been marked by developments that have surprised the mine owners considerably. Their surprise is mixed with indignation. Relations between them and the smelting trust are not of the most cordial nature.

A contract was submitted by the smelting company to the mine owners several weeks ago. It called for the producers to deliver their whole output to the company for a period of five years. The price for freight and treatment would be on the same basis as at present. The scale is a sliding one, but it means a charge of about \$21 a ton on most of the ore shipped from the Coeur d'Alenes.

In addition the contract set forth that the price at which lead should be sold would be settled between the mine owners and the smelting trust. It was proposed to hold a conference every six months, when the mine owners and the smelting company should agree on the price of lead for the coming half year. In case the two parties should not be able to agree, it was fixed that the matter should be referred to an arbitrator. The spirit of the arrangement was to be friendly.

This contract was fairly well liked by most of the big Coeur d'Alene mine owners. It would go into effect the first of next year. A meeting of them was arranged in New York, when they should confer with the smelting men. The meeting was held last week. When the Coeur d'Alene men assembled at the offices of the American Smelting & Refining company, they were met by D. Guggenheim, who is supposed to be at the head of the big trust.

"Gentlemen," he said suavely, "we have decided to change the contract which we offered you some time ago. Instead of fixing the price of lead by agreement, we shall dispense with that superfluity. Hereafter our company will fix the price of lead. We shall pay you for your product on that basis."

The announcement fairly staggered the Coeur d'Alene men. They found themselves confronted with the necessity of selling their ore at a price to be fixed arbitrarily by the purchaser. At present the smelting trust is interested in holding up the price of lead, for it has a surplus of about 60,000 tons on hand that must be worked off. A fall of a cent a pound would mean a loss of a million dollars. But the mine owners reasoned that many things might happen inside of five years. They were not at all ready to bind themselves for that time to sell their ore at a price to be set by the buyer.

They argued the point at length, but the manager of the smelting trust stood firm. He took the stand that the company had the matter cinched and the mine owners would of necessity come to its terms.

Thus far the mine owners have not shown any disposition to accede to the demand. They are returning from the conference exceedingly dissatisfied. Richard Wilson, of the Mammoth, Thomas Greenough of the Morning Star, and Frederick Burbidge, of the Coeur d'Alene Development company, are already back. John A. Finch is expected back this week.

There is a hope that the American

Smelting company will recede from its position. If it refuses, the mine owners have under consideration the acquiring of smelting facilities of their own.—Spokesman-Review.

A press dispatch from Spokane, dated a few days after the above was printed, says that John A. Finch, manager of the Standard, the richest mine in the Coeur d'Alenes, got back last night from New York. He said: "The mine owners will not consider this new proposal seriously. There is a strong feeling that if the trust does not relax its demand the mine owners will construct smelters of their own for handling the output of the Coeur d'Alene district."

Rich Mines and Farms Need Railroad.

E. E. Cleaver has returned from Prairie City, accompanied by his brother, Dr. Lon Cleaver. They brought with them specimens of ore from different Grant county mining properties which are rich in value. From the Clayton & Guker group, six miles north of Prairie City, they show ores that range in value according to assay from \$50 to \$500 a ton. This property is in the Quartsburg district where Zoeth Houser's mine is located. The Keystone owned by the Ladd estate of Portland yields gold ore which assays \$180 a ton. The Willie Boy, owned by Reese & McIntyre, yields from \$40 to \$80 a ton in gold and 15 per cent copper. Present Need, owned by P. F. Morey of Portland, contains \$200 a ton ore. The Will Cleaver group, 12 miles south of Prairie City, assays \$50 to \$60 in gold and 7 per cent copper. Most of the ore of these mines is base and must be smelted on the ground or shipped out. The great need of this section of the country, say the Cleaver brothers, is railroad transportation. That is all that is keeping it from being not only a great mining section, but an important agricultural region. The cost of shipping out ore or shipping in machinery is enormous by wagon road and all the profits of the mines are eaten up by freight rates. Agricultural products have only local markets, which are limited. A great deal of fruit is allowed to rot each year for want of consumers. Hay is worth but \$3.50 a ton because of no market. Agriculture languishes because of no impetus from good markets or means of shipping products to the outside world. It is predicted that when a railroad enters the interior of Grant county it will become one of the greatest and richest counties of the state.—Pendleton Tribune.

Activity in Susanville District.

John Harrington, a prominent mining man of Susanville, in a recent letter to Harry Timmons of this city, says that Susanville is one of the best mining districts in Oregon. He is a man of wide experience in the mining business and owns the largest interest in a group of claims located near the Badger mine. Mr. Timmons and Dr. Lantz, of this city, own one claim each in the group and several Portlanders are interested in the mines. Mr. Harrington states that the Badger mine has four six-horse teams and four eight-horse teams busily employed at hauling ore to Sumpter. A great deal of this ore is worth \$11 a pound, averaging \$20,000 a ton. The mine employs 35 men. The Stockton and Bull of the Woods mines are also good properties. They have machinery for development at Sumpter, which will soon be transferred to the mines. Two other mines with prospect shafts can be bought for \$50,000 each, it is reported, but the owners are not anxious to sell at that price. They claim that when they get down on the lead that amount can be taken out in a short time.—Pendleton Tribune.

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