BRAINS COUNT IN SMELTER BUSINESS

Intellectual Application Has Much to Do With Profits of Industry.

BIG MONEY MADE IN SPITE OF DIFFICULTY

American and United States Companies Have Shared Vast Fortunes.

The miner who is subject to the peculiar policy of certain smelters that are in a position to demand sometimes more than their due for treating ore and generally penalize a very complex ore, often wonders what are the profits of these metallurgical works. People who have bought the shares of smelting companies also occasionally question the philanthropy of the management when dividends are declared out of profits. Even the employees of the smelters will speculate on the results of a profitable or unprofitable year, especially when the day arrives on which a change in the salary account is usually made, says the Mining World.

There are other economic factors which make an analytical discussion of smelter profits interesting; these include the dependence of the local population (storekeepers, etc.) upon the successful operation of the metallurgical works. The latter group of dependents upon the smelter have experienced some pecuniary inconveniences as a result of the panic last fall, but there are signs that the situation has improved materially during the last two or three months, and is likely to continue to be bettered in the closing months of the year by the anticipated increase in consumption of the smelter products. Where, however, the operations of a smelter are interrupted by smoke and fume litigation, earnings are severely taxed and what would ordinarily be considered profits might well be classed as a reserve fund to be drawn on by the lawyers and their successful complainants against the smelter.

Improvements in smelting, and the installation of labor-saving devices, aid largely in attaining the success which means profits to the operating company and its shareholders. Consolidation of smelters to economize management and regulate treatment charges has in at least two cases compounded the interest on the capital invested. Technical skill and the payment of a bonus to employees have resulted in far greater profits than were made when the smelters were operated individually.

Reviewing the progress of the American Smelting and Refining company since it acquired the Guggenheim plants, at which time the capitalization of the so-called smelter trust was increased to $100,000,000, the net earnings have been increased by over $5,000,000 per annum. During the fiscal years from 1903 to 1907 the net earnings grew from $7,576,785 to $11,509,870. The figures for the year ending April 30, 1908, are not yet available, but there is reason to believe that the slump in metal prices has seriously affected earnings.

The dividend payments by the smelter combination from its organization in April, 1899, to July, 1908, amount to the large total of $43,206,553, of which the preferred shareholders received $28,706,553, or at the rate of 7 per cent per annum on par, $100, and the holders of the common stock $14,500,000. The last quarterly dividend on the common stock was at the rate of 4 per cent per annum. In addition to these dividends, there has been created by the combination for its employees a profit-sharing fund, which from 1904 to 1907 (fiscal years) amounted to $1,297,272.

It is noteworthy that during the period of 1902-3, when the smelter trust's net earnings were $7,576,785 and only the preferred dividend of $3,500,000 (7 per cent) was paid, the monthly average price of silver varied from 45.57 to 52.88 cents per fine ounce, and lead from 4.075 to 4.567 cents per pound. In 1903-4 when the net earnings were $7,905,572, the dividends $4,750,000 (of which $1,250,000 was on common stock), and the employees' profit-sharing fund was created by the setting aside of $91,253, the monthly average price of silver ranged from 52.86 to 60.36 cents per ounce, and that of lead from 4.075 to 4.475 cents per pound. In 1906-6 when the net earnings were $10,161,358, the dividends $6,750,000, and the employees' profit-sharing fund increased by $449,204, the monthly average price of silver was 57.832 to 66.10 cents per ounce, and for lead, 4.50 to 5.60 cents per pound. In 1906-7 when the net earnings were $11,509,670, the dividends $6,750,000 (of which $3,250,000 was paid on the common stock), and the profit-sharing fund of the employees was enriched by $540,000, the monthly average price of silver was 65.11 to 70.812 cents per ounce, and of lead, 5.69 to 6 cents per pound.

A creditable record has also been established by the United States Smelting, Refining and Mining company, which since its organization in March, 1906, to July, 1908, has paid common and preferred dividends to the aggregate amount of $5,478,622 on an issued capital of $41,346,650. The preferred stock yields 7 per cent per annum, and the common 4 per cent; both $50 par value.

These enormous profits suggest that the metallurgical industry is a fertile field for fortunes of a kind that depend not alone on the natural resources, but on the intellectual application of the principles of economy and shrewd management.

BATTLE MOUNTAIN IS HOME OF BIG MINES

That another one of the world's big gold producers will shortly be heard of in the vicinity of Battle Mountain appears certain from the wonderful showing that is being found on the Independence property, which is located in the Pittsburg district, about sixteen miles southeast of the town of Battle Mountain, says the Battle Mountain Herald.

Recent prospecting on this ground has shown some phenomenal values and new ledges and ore shoots are being found almost daily. The main vein system of the Independence property and also the Hill Top group, which joins the Independence on the north, occurs in a most favorable formation, having a large porphyry dike on the east and trending northerly and southerly with the vein system, while on the west is a mixed formation of quartzite and rhyolite. Near the contact with the porphyry the rhyolite seems to change into quartz, and it is here that the best values are found. The Independence is located on a mountain 800 feet high. At the foot of this mountain is the millsite, which is on a flat at the side of a small gulch. A shaft has been sunk on the main vein to a depth of seventy feet. Neither hanging wall nor footwall has been found and everything taken from the shaft is a high grade of free milling ore. A drift has been run at the bottom of the shaft for a distance of thirteen feet on the vein, which gave an average value of over $50 per ton.

Numerous rich stringers have been encountered in this shaft and a great deal of "picture ore" has been taken therefrom, giving assays away up in the thousands. About ten tons of sorted ore, which is now in the ore house at the shaft, will average better than $200 per ton. The balance of the ore from the shaft (about 300 tons) will average about $40 per ton. The vein here is no doubt a contact vein with a northerly and southerly trend. The formation of this vein is a much altered quartzite, while east of the vein, and forming the footwall, is a strong porphyry dike. From this dike to the shaft, measuring fifty feet, is all vein matter and pans free gold. Assays taken from this part gave an average value of $16.80 per ton. All the values were in gold with small traces of silver. It can readily be seen that all of this part of the vein can be milled with good profits.

About 300 feet southwest of the seventy-foot shaft and on the same elevation, a vein four feet wide has been crosscut sixty feet deep by a 100-foot tunnel. The average value of this vein is $10.60 per ton. About 200 feet south of the shaft a huge porphyry dike cuts the vein system. The dike is over 300 feet wide and samples taken every eight to ten feet the entire width gave an average of $3.80 per ton. Another vein eighteen inches to two feet wide, which assayed $56 per ton, and running more easterly and westerly than the other two veins, has recently been discovered, but no work has yet been done on it. Ore has been found 1000 feet south of the seventy-foot shaft and on the same line of that vein, which assayed as high as $300 per ton. Though very little work has been done on this part of the property, there is no doubt but that good ore bodies will be found here also.

One of the most important strikes yet made on the property was the finding of a two-foot vein about 500 feet south of the shaft and a short distance from the big dike. This vein is rich in free gold, which can easily be seen with the naked eye. Recent assays here give returns of from $100 to $250. The Independence property is located about one mile and a half west of the old Dean property, and a particularly pleasing feature is that the ores are almost identical in formation and appearance. The high grade of the ore and the immense bodies now in sight gives every indication that the property will son rank among the biggest producers in the entire state.

M. B. Dudley and H. C. Christensen, who have had the property bonded for some time, have succeeded in interesting some of the most prominent mining operators in the East, and an active campaign of development and installation of a complete plant of machinery and mill will be commenced immediately.

HISTORY OF PHOSPHATE MINING OF COUNTRY

Phosphate mining began in the United States in 1868, in South Carolina, with a production of 12,262 tons of crude rock. The existence of the rock had been known since 1837, but the possibilities of its commercial use were not recognized until 1859. According to Otto A. Moses, "In 1859 Professor Shepard and Colonel L. M. Hatch suggested the utilization of phosphatic marls in the manufacture of commercial fertilizers, and started a factory at or near Charleston, which was, however, soon abandoned. Remains of their compost heap were utilized by neighboring farmers with good effect long after the war. At the close of the war Dr. N. A. Pratt, formerly connected with the niter bureau of the confederacy, visited Charleston with the object of starting sulphuric acid chambers. About this time Dr. St. John Ravenel, of Charleston, who had mined marl extensively at Stoneys Landing, on Cooper river, for the manufacture of cements, noticed the nodules, analyzed some of them, and found them to contain much phosphate of lime. He became engaged soon after in the manufacture of commercial fertilizers from foreign phosphate rocks. Then followed the discovery (in August, 1867) which has been of such vital importance to agriculture and the prosperity of South Carolina. Pratt and Holmes (Charleston Mining Co.), Ravenel and Dukes (Wando Co.), then located territory. The value of the deposits became known; other valuable beds were discovered, and many persons and considerable capital were soon employed in developing the new industry by mining the crude rock and exporting or manufacturing it on the spot into superphosphates. Later on, the beds of many navigable streams were found to be largely paved with the valuable substances."—Mining Science.

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United States Output Far Exceeds Imports From All Other Countries.

UTAH HIGH UP IN LIST OF PRODUCERS

Growing Uses of Substance Give Impetus to Mining in All States.

The long-drawn-out controversy between the United States and Venezuela, in which the great Trinidad asphalt concession has figured prominently, has perhaps created the impression that this country is wholly dependent on that famous bitumen lake for its supply of asphalt. It is true that we buy abroad large quantities of this paving material, and that more than half of the imports now come from the island of Trinidad, but our own production greatly exceeds the total imports, and although the increase in our consumption of the material is rapid, the growth in the proportion of home production over importations is even more marked. In 1907 the United States produced 223,000 tons of asphalt, valued at $2,826,000, against imports of 160,000 tons, valued at $648,000. Four years ago the total production and importations of the United States amounted to but 240,000 tons; in 1907 the total of production and imports amounted to 383,000 tons, showing an increased use of over 150,000 tons. In 1887 only 4000 tons were produced in the United States, and in 1897 less than 76,000 tons.

Deposits of the various forms of asphalt are found in Kentucky, Oklahoma, Utah, California, Texas, Wyoming, Kansas, Missouri and West Virginia. The location, character and general features of these deposits are described in an advance chapter from Mineral Resources of the United States, calendar year 1907, on the production of asphalt and bituminous rock, by J. A. Taff, now ready for free distribution by the United States Geological survey.

Although asphalt is used chiefly in street paving, it is also applied to many other purposes, such as for waterproofing metals, papers and fabrics, for preserving wood, in briquetting and in concrete construction.

The hardest test of asphalt manufacture is said to be in providing pavement for a climate having extreme variations in temperature. If made of a consistency to withstand great heat in summer without melting or becoming so soft as to be useless, it is likely to become extremely brittle in freezing weather and to chip and crack. Thus in the Philippines or other tropical climates, where the sun heat may be intense, but where the cold need not be considered, asphalt pavement can be made which will stand climatic conditions and endure wear better than in many temperate climates, such, for instance, as that of Washington.

In connection with paving or rather "good-roads" work, an interesting use is being made of the asphalt residuum of petroleums whose base is asphalt, including most of the oils of the far west. Some of the California and Texas oils, which carry a very large proportion of asphalt—as much as 35 per cent—when sprinkled on road surfaces, make ideal "good roads." In southern California, particularly, thousands of miles of heavy, sandy roads, over which it was formerly impossible to trot a horse hitched to a light buggy, have been rendered solid and speedy by a single sprinkling of oil, and the houses along the roadside have been freed from the blowing sand and dust which is, along natural roads, a great discomfort to the inhabitants of arid or semi-arid regions. The eastern petroleums, which have a paraffin base, can not be satisfactorily used for this purpose. These heavy oils of the southwest are less expensive than the best eastern oils, and it may be possible and desirable to use them for the improvement of some eastern roads.

NATIONAL LEAD BUSINESS IS CLOSE TO NORMAL

In the first six months of the current year—or since January 1—the volume of business which the National Lead company has booked was 99 per cent of that in the corresponding period of 1907. January and February were poor months, but the succeeding four showed a phenomenal improvement. The National Lead company puts on the market ten or more different commodities, but the main product is white lead. The company is the world's largest consumer of pig lead. It consumes each year at least double the amount of the next largest user. This year there has been an enormous demand for white lead and oil, in which the National company has done the largest business in its history. The heavy demand is due for the most part, to the closing down of many factories, the managements of which took advantage of the depression to repair and paint their establishments following a period of several years of unceasing activity.

In other lines the company's business has shown a heavy falling-off as compared with the same six months of last year. Red lead, for instance, which comes into prominent play in structural steel work, has dropped off in volume considerably, owing to cessation of bridge-building and other heavy iron work. During the recent depression, when other manufactories were closing down entirely or running their plants on part time only, the National Lead company operated its largest plants on comparatively full time. For a period of three weeks only, the last two in December and the first in January—according to its usual custom—the company shut down to permit of stock-taking. New orders now coming in are pretty evenly distributed, although those from New England are slightly in the lead, while the Chicago and St. Louis sections are not far behind. The company has about 5600 stockholders, and of these some 4000 are holders of the preferred shares. There are no large expenditures in contemplation during the current year, either for improvements or additions.—Boston News Bureau.

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The contract between the State of Utah and the United States Government for the segregation of 43,000 acres of land under the CAREY ACT in the Pahvant Valley, Millard County, Utah, in accordance with the application made by the Oasis Land & Irrigation Company, is now ready for the signature of

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NEVADA STOCKS ARE FEELING PROSPERITY

Splendid Advance Is Made During July in Market Value of Stocks.

That Nevada is beginning to feel the impetus of optimism that prevails throughout the country is apparent from the splendid advance that has been made in the Nevada mining stocks recently. The Goldfield Tribune gives a list of leading stocks of Nevada, showing the advance made by them in market value during the period between July 7 and 20. The most striking advance was made in the Goldfield Consolidated stock, this security adding almost $2,000,000 to its market value in that length of time. The figures given are as follows:

	July 7.	July 20.	Gain.
Atlanta	$ .16	$ .20	$ 80,000
Booth	.15	.19	40,000
Baby Florence	.02½	.06½	42,500
Blue Bull	.07½	.11½	35,000
Consolidated	5.32	5.70	1,900,000
Combination Frac.	.51½	1.15	635,000
Combination	.03½	.05	15,000
Columbia Mt	.12	.16	40,000
Florence L. & M.	.03½	.04½	5,000
Florence	3.05	3.15	125,000
Grandma	.03¾	.06¼	37,500
Jumbo Extension	.30	.50	250,000
Kewanas	.24	.37	130,000
Mohawk Ledge	.01½	.04½	35,000
Mohawk Jumbo	.09½	.16	40,000
Red Hills	.17	.23	60,000
Red Top Ext.	.08½	.11½	30,000
Sovereign	.01	.02	50,000
Sandstrom	.24	.29	50,000
Yellow Tiger	.05	.07	30,000
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