

Correspondence.

FILL UP THE WEST.

Editor MONETARY TIMES:

SIR,—Your journal has said some sensible and even generous things on the necessity for developing our great West, and on the proper policy of concerted effort in the way of immigration schemes. People out here feel keenly on the matter, and are a little sensitive perhaps at seeing the comparatively small attention people in Eastern Canada pay to a subject that is here considered so vital. I have not seen any comment in your journal on the speech made last September by Mr. Fraser, M.P. for Guysboro, N.S., in the Dominion House, and I therefore enclose you part of it, which I respectfully commend to your attention:

"Now, the question of immigration to the North-West, and not only to the North-West, but to all the provinces, is the most important that can engage the attention of this House. There is no other matter that both parties ought to be agreed upon more than this, and I am sure that the facts of the case prove that the immigration policy of the late Government was one of the most doleful failures that ever were known in any country. I agree with the hon. gentleman in his description of the class of people that ought to come into this country. But the policy of hon. gentlemen opposite had made the country what it is. They started in by giving to speculative companies immense tracts of land. They gave men to understand that if they went up there they could have large areas of land, and make fortunes and return again. They forget that the principle underlying immigration ought to be that men should go to a country as their home, there to take up a piece of land, to engage in its culture, and by the accretions of year by year do what is done in the older provinces, adding to their wealth by little, and thus make a stable population. The effect was the very opposite. I am only speaking for myself, but we must retrace all our steps in this matter, and free every acre of land in the North-West and give it to the people."

It is quite probable these remarks will not coincide with everyone's opinion, but surely this is not a time for quibbling over such matters. We must be bold and progressive if we intend to reach any result, and if I am a judge at all, the Government only want a reasonable assurance of public opinion being at their back to really take up the subject of the development of the West in dead earnest. Is it too much to hope that Canadians outside the Province of Manitoba can be got to take a live interest in this matter, for the general good? In any scheme sufficiently broad and comprehensive to accomplish practical results, at a date within which those of us at present on this earth may hope to derive some benefit therefrom, the new Minister of the Interior will surely run across that unfortunate rock of "local interests," and will likely be accused of attempting to advance those of the West to the detriment of the East, and all such trash as that. It is with the object of anticipating such absurd contentions in advance of any formal declaration of policy, that I say the matter should first be brought forward outside of this province. I commend the matter to your best judgment.

CITIZEN.

Winnipeg, 16th November.

BRITISH COLUMBIA MINES.

Under the heading of "Mines versus Claims," the *Montreal Gazette* of Saturday last prints an interview with Mr. John E. Hardman, M.E., who has spent some time in the Kootenay District of late. Mr. Hardman has had much experience as mine-owner, manager and consulting engineer, with gold mining in Nova Scotia [which, it is to be remembered, is quartz mining, different from the ore-mining of Kootenay]. He is a past president of the Mining Society of Nova Scotia, and has been lecturer at McGill College, in mining engineering and metallurgy. During the past summer he has, as consulting engineer, visited the British Columbia gold mining district in the interests of a wealthy London (Eng.) syndicate. These are his views, here and there condensed. Though decidedly "chilly" reading, compared with what we are accustomed to see in the

dailies respecting Rossland, they are worth considering:

"I have just returned from Rossland, having been out in British Columbia for the past sixteen weeks. I have been travelling in that Province in the interests of a syndicate of London bankers. I spent the month of August in Rossland, and also returned there for a few days at the beginning of November. I think the camp very much over-rated. There are, undoubtedly, some good mines there, which will be more or less permanent; but I believe the productive belt to be confined to a comparatively small area. The town at present is

BUILT FAR AHEAD OF THE MINES.

That is wrong. The town is boomed to an extent which the development of the mines to-day does not warrant. As the daily newspaper, the *Rossland Record*, says: "This camp is not being established on the basis of a pay-roll at present." It is self-evident that such a basis is the one upon which the future of the town depends. So far, practically, the reputation of two mines, the Le Roi and War Eagle, whose dividends amount to the neighborhood of \$400,000, is the foundation upon which this boom has been built up. I consider that a collapse is inevitable, as it is a matter of certainty that many, far too many, of the mere prospects which have been organized into stock companies, and whose stock has been placed on Canadian, chiefly Toronto, markets, are worthless, and can never hope to return any money to shareholders. There are two chances which have to be taken by every claim in the Rossland district before it can become a mine with a prospect of a dividend, viz.: 1st, the chance of finding a crevice or fracture plane which has been large enough and strong enough to permit the formation of an ore body; and, 2nd, the chance as to whether that ore body, when found, will have one or more chutes of pay ore in it. Pay ore in Rossland at the present time means \$18 a ton or better. Perhaps I should say over \$20 per ton; for the cost of freight and treatment is \$11 per ton, and to this must be added costs of mining, developing and superintendence, which, on an average, will add from \$7 to \$10 per ton to the charge mentioned. The ore bodies of Rossland appear to lie along large fracture planes, and none that I have seen can be properly described as fissure veins; rather I should consider them all to belong to what may be called replacement veins."

THE DEVELOPMENT.

"What development," he was asked, "did you note between your August and November visits?"

"I was much surprised," replied Mr. Hardman, "at the small quantity of ore on the dumps in November. The large dumps of second-grade ore in the Le Roi, which were noted in August, had practically disappeared in November, having been shipped without waiting for the advent of the Red Mountain Railway. There is no doubt in my mind but that Rossland will have from a half dozen to a dozen permanent mines, and will be a permanent mining camp, but to talk of its rivaling Johannesburg is to talk nonsense, unless it should turn out that some cheap method of extracting the gold (such as Admiral Selwyn's process, by means of the polychloride of sulphur) is available, when large bodies of low grade ore will be made pay ores, which they cannot be so long as the present method of smelting to a copper matte is carried on. Pyritic smelting is not feasible, as the ore is a pyrrhotite, and not a pyrite, and has no sulphur to spare. The present average copper composition of a Rossland ore may be taken as from 2 to 3 per cent."

West Kootenay has many other promising camps beside Rossland; in fact, the best part to-day of West Kootenay is the Slocan county, where mines which are never heard of in the newspaper despatches, and which are not on the stock lists, are earning good dividends and are paying their owners handsomely for the money invested. There is also the district around Nelson and tributary to it, on which are the Hall Mines, Ltd., and the Poorman, a free gold property. This Nelson district is full of promise, and some realization. Much is doing in the Lardeau country, particularly in the Trout Lake section, and it is among the strong probabilities that well-known American smelting works will locate at some points along the Columbia River and Arrow Lakes. Indications point strongly to Robson as an important metallurgical centre.

A NOTE OF WARNING.

"British Columbia is a tremendously rich mineral country, and will ultimately be a shining jewel in the aggregation of Canadian provinces, but its future will be retarded, rather than promoted, by this unscrupulous and indiscriminating promotion of companies whose stock is flooding the Toronto market, and whose leading spirits are contemplating an attack this winter upon the Montreal and Boston public. My advice to the Montreal public is to demand with each prospectus the report of a reliable mining engineer, and to accept no non-assessable stock in a corporation organized outside of the control of Dominion laws. This non-assessable feature of many stocks now upon the Eastern market is going to lead to law, to litigation, and to the condemnation of many otherwise valuable mining properties."

Some of these views and statements are combated in Monday's *Gazette* by a mining commission firm of Montreal and Toronto, who profess speaking of Mr. Hardman's statement, that the ore bodies of Rossland cannot be described as true fissure veins, and that some of the mining engineers of high standing that have visited the camp are W. de L. Benedict, Clarence King, W. Gallagher, Henry and Louis Janin, Covington Johnson, Sussman, Pritchard, Clemes, Fraser, Cohen and others. Their reports were for private enterprise, and not intended for publication, but without exception they spoke favorably regarding the magnitude and permanency of the camp. They all believe the veins are true fissures of the regular order, although somewhat altered by the forces of nature. He offers an explanation why Mr. Hardman did not find any ore on the dumps at the Le Roi and War Eagle mines, and declares that "Pritchard, who has spent six years in Johannesburg; Cohen, the representative of a Jewish syndicate, and the gentleman who reported on the district for Barney Barnato, all declare most unequivocally that Trail Creek district is far better than any South African gold mining region, and that the presence of gold in vast quantities is beyond all question."

[THE MONETARY TIMES anticipated this pronouncement of Mr. Hardman when it said, October 16th, page 523: that that gentleman, after his Kootenay visit, "does not give a rose-colored report. This is because he has probably been accustomed to the treatment of free milling ores, rather than to smelting propositions, such as the ores of Trail, Boundary, etc." The opinion we then expressed was that "there are large bodies of ore in some places out there, which are not of high grade, still these will pay well under proper management and when better facilities for transport are obtained."] Ed.

CHOOSING A VOCATION.

"The vocations of many men are simply a matter of accident," says "Fred. Woodrow." "What their fathers did or their uncles proposed, or what first turned up when in search of employment, literally fixes the fate of many a youth. It is simply the case of heads and tails in the toss of a penny. It is true that in many cases poverty compels the haphazard method, but it is far from being true in all cases. It is also true that the modern type of a boy has a fad in his head that perspiring for his daily bread is bad policy, and that eight hours a day in a mill, a foundry, or a machine shop is not a matter of choice, but misfortune. He prefers a genteel business with its white hands, its undisturbed necktie, its tanned shins and its social standing. It is a free pass to certain circles, where otherwise if he was but a plain mechanic, he would be denied both chair and cake, and possibly a wife with a bank account. All this has to be admitted; social sugar and social flies cannot be argued out of the world; but for all that, there is a large number of level-headed and practical lads who are neither dukes nor imbeciles, who by the mistake named are as misplaced in their callings as a man would be in the shafts of a cart, and a mule on the driver's seat. It would not be getting outside the law of gravitation, or on the dark side of the moon, if some good horse sense was used in determining the trade or calling of a boy. It would save some repentance and possibly some big mistakes."