

tion is made to them for record, it shall be the duty of the official to transcribe on two of those plates all the particulars relating to the record in question with acid or some other indelible composition. These plates may then be given to the locator who shall be allowed the same number of days to return and affix them to his No. I. and No. II. posts (with wire nails) as he was allowed by law to perfect his record in the first instance after staking, and that the same rule should apply to assessment work and that all posts on which these plates are not affixed after a certain number of days have elapsed from the date of the original staking, as shown by the writing on the posts, or in regard to assessment work within a year after the first plates had been affixed, would be null and void and the ground open to anyone who wished to locate land thereon.

It is also held by some that in addition to the words "No. II. post, etc., etc., mineral claim," at present inscribed on the No. II. posts, all of the particulars of the claim and the direction of the No. I. and the discovery posts should be written on it.

Douglas, B.C.

L. A. AGASSIZ.

[We fancy in West Australia there is a law on somewhat similar lines. But there a prospector is obliged to carry with him a number of tin plates and a pot of white paint. The plates are affixed to the posts, marking the boundary of the claim staked off, and painted on the plates is a description of the claim, the name of the locator and the date of location.—Ed.]

### BIMETALISM AND THE MINER.

TO THE EDITOR:—To the majority of the readers of mining and other newspapers in Western America the volume of argument for and against bimetalism must appear so confusing and contradictory as to be exceedingly difficult of mental digestion. They cannot, however, fail to be struck by the prominence given to the purely commercial aspect of the question in the controversy as distinct from the point of view of the miner's interest. Indeed as far as the gold miner is concerned he seems hardly conscious of the great battle going on around him in the issue of which he has so much at stake.

Everyone, thanks to the deluge of articles written and speeches made on the subject, knows that the public gives to the miner in exchange for his ounce of gold so much provisions, so much labour and so much machinery. Year by year the same public have been obliged to increase the amount of these payments in kind to obtain the gold and the ounce of gold buys more to-day than ever it did before.

This fact constitutes in itself a grievance to certain bimetalists who argue that the increased purchasing power of gold has greatly benefitted the holders of large reserves of that metal or of bonds payable in it. While this is undoubtedly true, the bimetalists' argument, that no class in particular is responsible and therefore blameable for the rise in the value of gold, is only calculated to deceive those not connected with the gold mining industry. The miner knows that the poor man's diggings (let the Klondyke be "never so rich") will not again produce the greater part of the world's annual supply of gold. He is obliged to go into the fast places of the earth to find the precious metal. He cannot afford to surrender his gleanings so cheaply as he once did. He has been forced to cut down wages; to cheapen supplies; to invent the cyanide process in order to make ends meet in his business. Many experienced miners say, with what truth it is of course impossible to judge, that there never was a camp where gold did not cost \$25.00 an ounce to obtain. There certainly never was an industry where the investor was content with so small a margin of profit as he is in mining for gold. Whether or no there be cause for lament in the fact that some people have gold bonds instead of ranches, it must be borne in that in seeking to depress the value of the yellow metal at present in circulation a blow is being dealt at the metal still in the ground. It would be a bold man who would compare the earth's potential wealth with her minted currency. At the present rate of production the wealth underground is beyond question a more important factor in future numismatics than the coin now in circulation. There will possibly never come a time when the public, grown generous, will give a liberal profit to the miner for his toil. His love of speculation, the prospect of a bonanza some day and meanwhile small dividends or no dividends at all are the history of his efforts to supply commerce with her currency.

Soda Creek, B.C.

MONS MEG.

[We publish our correspondent's letter on account of the novelty of his views, but we neither admit his premises nor

like his logic in many important particulars. The purchasing power of gold is greater to-day than it was twenty years ago because competition has reduced the cost of manufactured articles and brought down transportation rates. The world's production of gold is annually increasing in amount, and improved mechanical appliances have made possible the profitable treatment, during comparatively recent times, of such low-grade bearing quartz as formerly would have been commercially worthless. Witness the case of the Black Hills' "Homestake" and of the Alaska "Treadwell." Our correspondent in support of his argument that there is a very small margin of profit in gold mining adduces the fact that the cost of producing one ounce of gold is \$25.00. He can go further than that and put the estimate at \$60, or at a relation of 8 to 1. But what does this prove? In ordinary mercantile business for every dollar earned fifteen are spent. Therefore dealers in merchandise are "content with a very small margin of profit." In the former case the chances of success are 33½ per cent and in the latter 6.3-5 per cent.—Ed.]

### THE ENGLISH INVESTOR AND SILVER MINES.

TO THE EDITOR:—You have no doubt remarked, sir, that with one or two notable exceptions English companies promoted, during the last few years, to acquire mine properties in British Columbia, have confined their investments entirely to Rossland and other strictly gold producing camps. This has always struck me as curious. Little had been done in the way of quartz mining previous to the advent of our American cousins into West Kootenay about six years ago. They recognized the potentialities of our immense silver lead deposits, and lost no time in acquiring and opening them up. Americans, unlike the English, are not prejudiced in favour of any particular metal. They will not pass a silver lead property, carrying from 75 to 100 ounces of silver and 40 to 60 per cent. lead, to the ton with contempt, and take a gold property in preference, which only gives a quarter of the tonnage value. They have taken advantage of the fact that with a moiety of the labour and expense, they can produce a ton of silver lead ore worth four tons of average low-grade gold bearing ore, and in consequence are reaping the large rewards to which they are justly entitled. Our silver lodes as a general rule, run vertically over the mountains, and they are being operated by tunnels without the aid of machinery, and in some a depth has already been attained of over 700 feet.

English investors should be shown that by far the richest camps in the province to-day are in the Slocan, and that twenty mines are worked now at a profit to one in Rossland.

GALENA.

### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. H. D., (Virden, Man.) We believe we cannot do better than quote the advice given recently by a contemporary, the New Denver *Ledge*, to a "tenderfoot" (excuse the term; it is kindly meant) who wrote, asking what outfit is required in a journey to Klondike. The following articles were suggested: "Plenty of money and carbon. A return ticket. An iron heart. A set of steel nerves. A mosquito antidote. A balloon if possible. A copper lined stomach. A volume of the *Ledge*. The above, with a little grub, should enable a man to be comfortable until the fever is past. Seriously, though, we would certainly advise you to stay comfortably at home if, as you say, you are doing well."

A & Co. (Denver, Colo.)—H. B. Wilson, Ashcroft; Frank Dick, Brandon, B.C.; W. F. McCulloch, Kamloops; W. J. Brown, A. L. McKillop, Nelson; MacFarlane, MacKenzie & Roberts, R. Marsh, Ordway Clark, Robins & Levy, Rossland; Chas. M. Wilson, Sandon; Winstead, Walt, Ruby, White-water; Dubois & Munro, John McVicar, Ymir.

R. A. H. (Sheffield, Eng.) Latest accounts have not been very satisfactory. This, we fancy, is owing a good deal to bad management. The mine is itself promising enough. A shipment of 100 tons was recently made to Swansea.

M. W. H. (Brantford, Ont.) You had better write to Dr. Carroll, the former Secretary, at Vancouver, for an explanation. The sale was entirely a *bona fide* transaction, and you need not fear that your money is lost.

J. H. C. (Ashcroft). Probably you allude to the British Canadian Gold Fields Exploration, Development & Investment Co., Ltd. This Company owns a number of properties near Ainsworth.