

The Canadian Miner.

ISSUED ONCE A WEEK

AND

Devoted to the interests of Miners, and all kinds of Mining; to the popularizing of Mining as a great National Industry; and to the protection of investors in Mining Companies.

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MINING IN ONTARIO.

THERE is at present in the Rainy River district every indication that the hopes of the reasonably sanguine of our mining men will be realized in the development which will take place within the next six months, and it is not too much to predict that in a short time Canada will have taken her place with Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United States as a gold-producing country. The continuity of many of our better known deposits has already been proved; it now remains for us to demonstrate their depth, and it has not been possible to do this in the limited time during which we have been operating. Perhaps the strongest argument in our favor is that the properties upon which, during 1895 and 1896, the largest amounts of money have been spent, viz: the Sultana, Regina, Foley, Mikado, Cornucopia, Saw-Bill, Hawk Bay, and Mascotte, have all turned out remarkably well, and many of them have already taken their place among the steady producers. The area covered to date by locations surveyed and taken up is merely a fringe along the shores of the lakes and rivers, and bears but a small proportion to that as yet unexplored, and the legitimate application of the argument is that there are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it. It would be indeed a remarkable thing if all the best properties were selected and operated in the first year.

And in respect of this there is no safer or more legitimate method for a syndicate to start operations on a small scale than by outfitting and sending into the field a survey and exploratory party capable of searching for, testing, and securing deposits of auriferous quartz, thus coming in on the ground floor without responsibility to innumerable small shareholders and with every limitation to liability. This we hear is already being done to a considerable extent.

One trouble with which the practical miner has to contend, and it is not the least

of them, is that many men whose mercantile progress has been based on prudence, forethought and sound common sense, apply none of these qualities to a mining investment, but expect 100% a month, whereas 15% per annum would be regarded as eminently satisfactory with regard to their own business. There seems to be an aureate microbe in the air which upsets the balance and undermines caution. If a prospective investor sets aside a sum, say of \$1,000, as something which is not required for his business and of which he can tranquilly bear the possible loss—well and good—but neither the investor nor the mining world at large is benefitted by the application of money to mining purposes which is elsewhere involved and necessary.

We fear the truth of this will come, in the near future, home to many who are now anxiously looking for returns from small investments made on the strength of an inviting and plausibly worded prospectus. We do not write for the mining man, who, it is to be presumed, knows his business better than we can teach it to him, but we do speak to those who feel the temptation to invest and can ill afford to lose. Unless information from the "inside" is available and the investor is thoroughly satisfied with the reasonableness of the undertaking, and the probity of those whose names are published in connection therewith, we offer *Punch's* immortal advice to those about to marry.

On the other hand, once it is proved that the scheme is practical, that no insurmountable physical difficulties exist, that the *modus operandi* is modern and economical, and those in charge are competent and responsible, we can imagine no more fair or honorable calling or investment. The actual production of the precious metals increases the world's wealth; it calls for technical skill, foresight and prudence, and the success of a mine does not depend on a corresponding failure elsewhere—as unfortunately is the case with too many of our "up-to-date" business undertakings.

It not infrequently happens that a mill is erected on a property before the underground work is sufficiently advanced to furnish an unfailing supply of ore. The temptation to get up a mill and turn out a brick is great, and owners, dazzled by the vision of this "phantasmal brick," are apt to forget that every hour during which a mill is shut down means an actual and very considerable loss in money.

While the expenditure of such a sum is by no means necessary before milling begins, \$40,000 is not too large an estimate to make to provide for a complete development to a depth of about 250 feet with the accompanying drifting and winze work. This of course is with reference to quartz mining only, and under the ordinary circumstances governing the cost of labor, supplies, fuel, etc. Some mines, such as the galena deposits of the Slocan, will be producers and shippers from the start, but in ordinary cases it is safe to provide for a much larger initial expenditure in development than is usually considered necessary.

The true way to proceed is—demonstrate the presence and value of ore bodies, then put

up the mill. Cases of course exist in which this value is so high that it will practically pay for the work in progress, but these are exceptional and must be dealt with as such.

Into the varying treatment of ores we cannot here enter, suffice it to say that it should in every instance be determined only by the most careful and exhaustive experiments. Much of the concentrates we are now obtaining runs very high in value, and the question of chlorination or cyanidation is correspondingly weighty. The former is rather the more complicated of the two and requires possibly more care in operation: the latter leaves a loop hole for loss by the employment of solutions too strong in cyanide, and, therefore, consequent waste. Literature embodying the results of world-wide practice is easily obtainable, and we advise a careful perusal of it by those interested in its subject matter.

In these, and all other questions affecting the successful development of our magnificent mineral resources, the public will find THE CANADIAN MINER ready and anxious to do what can be done, and to this end we invite co-operation and support of our readers and contributors.

THE TARIFF AND MINING MACHINERY.

THAT there should be not a few in some of our mining regions who approve of the admission of foreign mining machinery free of duty is what we would expect. Much of the British Columbia gold mining is done by Americans, and naturally Americans will deal, in the absence of a duty against American machinery, with fellow-countrymen with whom they have been maintaining relations. That there should be Canadians who approve of the regulation is also natural. Until recently little machinery specially used in mines has been made in Canada, and American machinery is commonly known to mining men. But now that we are producing much of the machinery here, and likely before long to make almost all kinds in the abundance which gold fields as great as, if not greater than, those of the United States must demand, we have every reason to hope that our machinery will be as good and as cheap as any purchased in the United States. Under these circumstances it seems eminently unwise to give our machinery men a set-back that may result in handing over the supply of mining machinery into American hands, with the likely enough result that the killing out of budding Canadian factories will be followed by an advance in prices. Eastern Canada pays much for the development of the West: the West should have some regard for the industries of the East. No feature in the fiscal policy of the country has met with more general approval than the old distinction in the tariff between free admission of machinery not made in Canada, and a duty on machinery such as Canada herself furnishes. There is no serious call for abolishing this distinction, and we hope the Government will reconsider the bearing of the new tariff in this regard.