

The British Columbia Mining Critic.

"I am Nothing, if Not Critical."—Shakespeare.

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ISSUED WEEKLY.

Devoted to the Interests of Mining and the Protection of Investors.

THURSDAYMAY 20, 1897.

Letters from practical men on topics connected with mining, mining machinery, mining laws, and matters relating to the mineralogical development of Canada, are always welcome.

Manufacturers and Dealers in appliances used in and about mines are invited to send illustrations and descriptions of new articles.

Views and descriptions of mines and mining locations solicited.

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MINING ENGINEERS, EXPERTS AND MINERS.

Now that British Columbia is becoming a well known mining field, the gentlemen who follow the calling of mining engineer, mining expert and practical miner are flocking to all parts of the province where indications of mineral riches are such as to seem to justify investigation. They come from Johannesburg, West Australia, New Zealand, Victoria and New South Wales; from England and the United States. Yet, so far, what reliance can be placed upon this heterogeneous class? Mining engineers with reputations from Australia, Cripple Creek, Johannesburg, or any other known place in the world, arrive here and know—nothing (a bold but true statement). The conditions of formation, stratification, mineral, etc., are so diametrically opposed to those they have met with in their previous experiences, that their knowledge of mining in other countries can only lead them astray here; so that, notwithstanding their mining ability, although helping them over technical points, it will not advance them in this country. In the meantime, their reports will of a necessity be written most cautiously, otherwise a doubt must be attached to their reliability.

The snow has now gone, and an engineer representing a strong firm of mining financiers, for instance, arrives for the purpose of purchasing mining properties: where does he gather his information? Generally at the hotel in which he stays. The first good talker tells him he has options on certain claims assaying from anything up to one thousand dollars. He immediately leaves for the desired spot, only to find something he did not expect—probably a ledge, probably one which he cannot judge; but he has to look wise, take samples, and after con-

will be satisfactory. These experts from all quarters of the globe express opinions to only those who do not and cannot understand them. Of miners there are very few, their places having been taken by loggers, fishermen, navvies and others; yet all these during a month's experience have gained more knowledge, they pretend, than men who have worked underground for a number of years.

It is requisite for engineers to be in this country at least six months, inspecting properties daily, and thoroughly investigating formation, stratification, etc. After that time they begin to understand just a little; and after a further six months they may possibly pass an unbiased opinion with some degree of authority. Meanwhile, however, they have to depend on the size of the lode, the value of its assays, and what they learn from those who have had more experience through longer investigation and living in the country, through snow and other difficulties. Experts of the class we have enumerated must, we say, have practical experience in their own business before they are competent to pass judgment on unknown values here. Yes, even experts must learn.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Numerous inquiries have been made of the BRITISH COLUMBIA MINING CRITIC as to the status of the Orphan Boy case now pending in our court. The assizes now being on, practically no "development work" will be done until next week. The committee of the shareholders of Vancouver will meet ere the close of the week, it is stated, and a definite plan of action be outlined, so that the legal proceedings will receive a deserved impetus. There is no recognized signal of retreat.

It may be not out of place to impress upon prospectors one important fact. There are prospectors and prospectors, but it is a fact known to venturesome and enterprising men that many of those sent out equipped with tools and supplied with needful funds in addition to part payment for services are derelict in their duties. Lounging about hotels, saloons and other places of repose, etc. is not performing their duty and is actually injurious to their own interests as well as dishonorable to their employers. Reports of the actions and non-actions of prospectors from sources unknown to them, reach those mostly interested and the consequences are that the unfavorable results of the venture discourages the man with capital from further seeking to discover, locate and possess worthy mineral lands. Let prospectors bear constantly in mind that their interests and those of their employers are identical and the result will prove mutually