

The Mining Convention

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS HELD AT RAT PORTAGE
ON JUNE 2ND, AND FOLLOWING DAYS.

Rat Portage, June 2.—Rat Portage is in gala dress, and simply crowded with mining men from all parts of the continent.

The convention opened in the new Hilliard opera house at 2 p. m., Geo. Drewry, president of the Mining exchange, in the chair.

Wm. Young, mayor, delivered a cordial address of welcome.

President Drewry followed, emphasizing and endorsing the mayor's address of welcome, and giving a brief account of the origin and objects of the convention.

D. C. Cameron also spoke along the same line.

Judge C. L. Lewis, of Duluth, who spoke of his attention being called to the country; the wisdom of holding such a convention, and on behalf of the United States visitors expressed cordial thanks for the courtesies extended to them. He said there was great interest in his city and state in this country, and United States capital was likely to come in large investments.

T. A. Rickard, state geologist of Colorado, gave a scholarly and well composed speech on the application of geology to mining, of which a synopsis will appear later.

Mr. Rathbone, late of the Transvaal, gave an impromptu address, very witty and taking, the chief point made being that mining should be governed more by experience and common sense than the hard and fast rules of geology. He gave several instances where geologists and scientists had laid down laws which in practical application were found absolutely false. For instance a statement made by an eminent Canadian scientist, who as the speaker said, ought to have known better, that the areas of commercial value were all on the south side of the international boundary, and did not extend into Canada. His advice was wherever gold is found let theories alone and be governed by experience and common sense.

Gen. H. L. Gordon, of Los Angeles, Cal., spoke briefly. He expressed his confidence in the country and drew a favorable comparison between this district and his own state, which is acknowledged to be the greatest mining district of the continent.

Jas. Conmee, M. P., spoke for the government and stated that they had been slow in the past but they were now prepared to go ahead, and he was of the opinion that if the matter of the mining school was pushed it would be obtained. He also spoke of the evil of acquiring too many claims, which seemed to be the sole aim of the people here, the result was every one had claims to sell and few were worked. He drew a comparison between this and corner lot speculation.

Mr. Hays, the new superintendent of the reduction works, announced that the works would be thrown open for inspection to visitors. This courtesy of starting the mill for the pleasure of the visitors marks a new departure in the history of the works and is calculated to extend and increase business under Mr. Hays' able management. The afternoon session adjourned about 5 o'clock.

SECOND DAY.

Rat Portage, June 3.—The convention committee believe in mingling pleasure with business. This morning was devoted to examining specimens at the Mining Exchange and visiting points of interest in town.

At 1 o'clock p. m. the steamer Monarch, chartered by the committee, was at her wharf to take visitors for a trip on the lake. The stars and stripes floated from her prow, the Union Jack from her stern. The Rat Portage band occupied the hurricane deck and to its lively strains the steamer pulled out. The route chosen was through the Devil's Gap to the Sultana mine. This trip gave the visitors a chance to get acquainted one with another and was undoubtedly one of the features of the convention.

Among those of note on board were: A. Blue, director of mines for Ontario; Prof. Coleman, Col. J. D. Crawford, of Montreal. The last named travelled through this country in the long ago. H. B. Co. times, and was much interested in seeing the improvement and development of the region. Col. Crawford is interested in a number of properties here and will inspect them before leaving. Mr. Franks, another visitor, is a mining expert from the Transvaal, where he has been employed in mining for some years. It is his intention to remain here for some time. Mr. Glover, sketch artist of the London Graphic, was on board, taking some snap shots with a kodak. Mr. Glover will be here for some months and do the mining district thoroughly for his paper. He has been making sketches for a number of prominent men at the convention. With him is a brother of Sir Charles Weldon, who has large interests out here. Robt. Jarvis Gilbert, St. John's, N. B., is another well known newspaper man. Francis B. Morgan, editor of the Central Magazine, Cleveland, O., and his father, Col. J. S. Morgan. Judge Lewis, of Duluth, and dozens of others, whose names are more or less familiar, especially among mining men. The day was simply perfect, refreshments were provided by the committee, the members of which were indefatigable in their efforts to promote the comfort and social intercourse of their guests.

On arriving at the Sultana, the visitors disembarked and rambled about the works. Of course it was not pos-

sible to take such a large number down the mine, but the stamp mill and chlorination works were thrown open and an interesting hour was spent in looking through them. Preparations are going forward for the erection of an additional thirty stamp mill and other improvements to the property. Mr. Hunter, the manager, gave the guests a kindly welcome and did his best to entertain them. Just as the boat swung out from the landing, Mr. Partridge, of Detroit, proposed three cheers for Mr. Caldwell and the Sultana mine. These were given with a will. The band struck up "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." The return trip was through the Keewatin channel and occupied about two hours. Many exclamations were heard on all sides as to the beauty of the scenery. When the Monarch drew into her dock a cheer was proposed for Rat Portage and ex-Mayor Barnes. Three cheers were given with a will. Mr. Barnes stepped upon a chair and returned thanks, and said that the committee hoped, that having made the visit pleasant, they would be likely to come again.

EVENING SESSION.

On the platform were President Drewry, Judge H. L. Gordon, E. F. Hutchings, of Winnipeg, Mr. Rickard, father of Mr. Rickard, state geologist of Colorado; Mayor McCreary, of Winnipeg, Henry Langford, Crown attorney, and a number of others.

The first speaker was Mr. T. A. B. Purchase, late of South Africa; this gentleman has spent 22 years in the mines of South Africa and as he is still a young man, must have gone there as a mere boy. He came to the country to look into an investment for some English companies and the committee are to be congratulated on securing so practical a man for a paper on "The economics of Gold Mining."

THIRD DAY.

Rat Portage, June 3.—The enthusiasm and good fellowship of the afternoon session insured the success of the Rat Portage mining convention from the start.

Shortly after 7.30 p. m. the town band took up its station outside the opera house, where they discoursed enlivening airs until 8 p. m. By 8.15 the house was full. Chairs had to be placed in the aisles. On the stage were George Drewry, president of the Mining Exchange; D. C. Cameron, chairman of reception committee; Walter Ross, Rat Portage; James Conmee, M. P. P.; Mr. Hopkins, B. S.; D. W. Bole, Rev. Dr. G. Bryce, and E. F. Hutchings of Winnipeg; ex-Mayor Barnes, W. L. Partridge, C. S. Morris and Rat Portage members of the convention committee.