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## MINING.

*Items From Our Travelling Correspondent.*

TANGIER.—Tangier is one of the oldest and most extensively worked gold districts in Nova Scotia, and is, undoubtedly, the widest known by reputation. Mining people generally are well acquainted with the history of the mines in this district, while with the general public the name "Tangier" is sufficient to turn their thoughts upon gold and gold mining. For many years it was the seat of important operations, and was regarded as the head centre of the gold interests of the Province. During the palmy days of the district, when gold was plentifully obtained, and the excitement of speculation was rife among capitalists, many companies were organized for working the mines, and a great deal of work was done. Mills were erected on different properties over a large section of the country, many leads were opened up and worked, thus affording employment for hundreds of men. In accordance with the demand for laborers in the mines there was a large influx of population from all parts of the country. To provide living accommodation many boarding houses and shanties had to be built; so that all influences working together tended to promote great general business activity. All was bustle and excitement, the stages were loaded with passengers, the hotels were crowded, the streets, at times of the day, thronged with men going to and from their work, and the mines and mills were running night and day in full blast. Had this state of things continued Tangier would have soon become a town of some importance, but it was not to be, the fever of the excitement began to die away. In spite of the richness of the leads many of the companies were losing money, and in course of time their properties were abandoned. Large numbers of men thrown out of employment were forced to leave the place. The tide had turned and a reaction had set in. The population began gradually drifting away, the business of the stores and hotels fell off, many boarding houses and shanties became deserted or were torn down, and the general aspect was decidedly discouraging. From time to time new companies would spring up, urged on by glowing prospects, and then there would be a partial revival, but after a short period of unsuccessful working the old story would be repeated; the mines would be closed down, and the outlook would be more gloomy than ever. The above is in substance a brief history of Tangier, where formerly all was bustle and rapid growth; to-day it is silent gloom and decay; with two single exceptions, which will be mentioned hereafter, there is no mining done there at present. The surface is disagreeably marked with slimy water, filled shafts and huge piles of dump. The sites of the mines are rendered desolate by weather-beaten and tumbledown shaft houses and other buildings, whilst in two or three cases are to be seen, lying idle, great gloomy-looking mills—evidences of needless and ill-advised expenditure. Still, in spite of all the apparently positive evidences to the contrary, there are many competent men—men of wide practical experience in mining, and with a thorough knowledge of the district, who confidently assert that the gold leads of Tangier are not yet nearly exhausted, and it only requires plenty of well directed capital in order that the mines may be profitably worked. If the opinion of these people be correct, then it may pertinently be asked:—1. How is it that so many of these mines have been abandoned? 2. That so much money has been lost in working them? 3. That capitalists are not willing to risk their money in further operations? The answers to these questions are very simple. 1. These mines have been abandoned because money was lost in working them. 2. Money was lost in working them because they were under incompetent management. 3. Capitalists are not willing to risk their money in working these mines because they take warning from the failure of others who have gone before. Now it is an established axiom that there is never a result without a cause, and so it is here. Questions 1 and 3 are results; the cause is to be found in number 2, which is itself a result. As questions 1 and 3 imply simple self-evident facts, and depend upon 2, no more need be said about them, but 2 is not so clear, while being the cause of the others, it is itself a result, and what we now desire is to show how it is an unnecessary result and therefore an unnecessary cause. Now, as a rule, the gold of Tangier is very coarse, it is gold that can be seen in the quartz, and it is well known that in the past working comparatively little of the gold seen in the quartz has been seen by the mine owners. It has been stolen by dishonest miners. The loss in this way is known to have been very serious. Now let this difficulty be overcome, either by the employment of strictly honest men or by close inspection, and one of the causes for the mines not paying will be eliminated. Another cause for the mines not paying when working—a cause much more important than that just given, for it includes that in it—is found in what we would term incompetent management.

Now, in dealing with this question of management, we will have to take a brief review of the way in which the working has been done. In the best days of Tangier, some of the Companies made a great deal of money. They worked rich leads, and went to only a little depth, say 100 feet, at that depth the ore was so poor as not to pay for working. After taking out the best of the ore near the surface these smaller Companies would perhaps sell out to some large concern, which would send a staff of engineers and agents to look after their interest and work the property. These agents, when they came, would laugh at the puny efforts of the tributary and small companies, and propose to carry on operations on a grand scale. They would scoff at the idea of only working at such shallow depths, and would declare their intention of going down, confident that the gold would come in again as rich as ever. Perhaps they were right in this belief. A great many practical men believe that such is the case; but be that as it may, no one yet ever had the pluck to try it at Tangier. They would put up big surface plants, fine mills and offices, keep a big crowd on deck and a few men below, spend fortunes above ground and a few thousands under it, and expect those few