

British Columbia Mining Critic.

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

British Columbia Mining Critic.

ISSUED WEEKLY.

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

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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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PARTLY TRUE.

The "British Columbia Review," of London, England, speaks to the following purport about mine company proposals and promotions of a doubtful sort, which hitherto have in England been far too many, and done—as they are still doing—much to retard the development of provincial mining enterprise as a result of an adequate influx of British capital.

"The samples of British Columbia mineral properties which have been offered in this market have in a large number of cases been mere shoddy, and among those few which have been sold how many have been honestly worth the money paid for them? In this mart, where the nations of the world are clamoring to sell their wares, sentiment has been permitted to influence business, and our colonies have been favored sometimes unduly. The confidence of the British investor was rudely shaken in regard to Westralia, and this lesson has not been forgotten. British Columbia had nearly everything in its favor when it came on the market: it possessed a few shipping mines developed with local capital (Spokane is not far from Kootenay); fortune had favored it with great natural advantages as regards climate, water communication,

size and extent of ore bodies, timber, game, etc.; it has found favor in the eyes of shrewd American investors and the purse strings of Europe were inclined to loosen. A little money was invested, more or less tentatively, and of the results practically nothing is known. Directors indulge in Utopian forecasts, as usual, but the public waits in vain to ascertain facts. What is being done on these properties—are there no mine managers? If there is no return on an investment it is at least some satisfaction to know how the money has been spent. The Government officials have done little or nothing to make known the resources of their province, and yet they hope to compete in this great market with established goldfields which spare no time or trouble in order to give the public the most complete and reliable information regarding their progress. This selfish and short-sighted policy would almost lead one to believe that those in whose hands the fortunes of the province mainly rest have no belief in its future, and are too busy lining their own pockets at the expense of our ill-informed public."

It is, however, equally true that much of the evil whereof the Review complains is directly due to the exceedingly low tone of business morality which now too largely prevails amongst English financiers who promote mining companies. Only too many of them, of whom apparently leading men on the London Stock Exchange think no worse by reason of this, would rather make larger profits illegitimately by foisting on the British public very doubtful and over-capitalised B. C. mining schemes, than make legitimately a really sufficient profit return by aiding the development of really good claims purchased, not, it is true, "for a mere song," but for fair and moderate values.

Our English critics may therefore, whilst legitimately criticising the shortcomings of British Columbians, look nearer home also and ask whether it is not a fact that too many English mine company promoters are sadly wanting in scruple. It is an open secret here in B. C. that it is often easier in London to dispense with doubtful or at least but little tested claims than