

CORRESPONDENCE.

DIAMONDS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Editor CANADIAN MINING JOURNAL:—

Sir,—Concerning the recently reported finding of diamonds in British Columbia, it should be noted that Mr. Robert A. A. Johnston, curator of the Geological Survey museum, who discovered small diamonds in some rock from Olivine Mountain, Tulameen district, British Columbia, has lately been quoted in a press despatch from Ottawa as having said: "The discovery is of no commercial importance. I have found it impossible to separate the diamonds from chromite and other varieties of rock in which they appear in the specimens found, without necessarily breaking them into small pieces. Of course, we could do this with a slow process, but commercially this would be out of the question."

Another press despatch quotes Mr. Chas. Camsell, also of the Geological Survey, as having suggested that diamonds may be found in the wash in streams near Olivine Mountain. I have no means of ascertaining—without delay—whether or not Mr. Camsell did so express himself, but I may say that if he did, his suggestion may, I think, be accepted as based upon reasonable conclusions. Mr. Camsell has during the four years last past done valuable work in investigating the geology and economic mineralogy of the Similkameen district of British Columbia, and two seasons of this time were spent in the Tulameen, which is in the northern part of the Similkameen district.

My object in writing on this subject is to make it quite clear that diamonds of commercial value may yet be found in the Tulameen region of this province, the

small specimens discovered by Mr. Johnston, assuming him to have been correctly quoted, are so small and occur under such conditions as to make them valueless from the point of view of the prospector and miner.

British Columbia had last year's experience with gross misrepresentations relative to gold in the Portland Canal district; now it is risking similarly damaging notoriety in respect to Steamboat Mountain; and even the Tulameen district is being shown under false colours. This last statement is made by me after reading in two of the leading daily newspapers of this province a notice of the alleged doings of the Platinum-Gold Fields Company, Limited, which, it is asserted, has proved 6,000 feet of Tulameen River with a Keystone drill, in which 6,000 feet "the actual value in gold and platinum is estimated at \$1,160,000. . . . The scene of present operations is just above the Nickel Plate mines at Hedley, which last year yielded a net profit of \$200,000." Since there is absolutely not the smallest connection between alluvial gravels of Tulameen River and the Nickel Plate lode mines situated in mountains downstream and 40 miles away, the deceptive intent of the reference to the Nickel Plate seems obvious, though only to those who know the situation. It will be well that the actual position in regard to the finding of diamonds in this province be made perfectly plain, so that no disappointment and loss may occur by reason of lack of knowledge of the facts.

E. JACOBS.

Victoria, B.C., April 17, 1911.

Obituary

Mr. James C. Fuller, who since the Le Roi mine at Rossland, B.C., has been operating on only a small scale has been performing the duties of surveyor and assayer as well as mining engineer, met his death as a result of having apparently drunk a solution of potassium cyanide in mistake for water. At the time of the sad occurrence he was alone in the mine laboratory. The mine foreman, answering a telephone call while engaged in his own office, heard Mr. Fuller say "Oh, Peters," but no more, so he hastened to ascertain the reason. The assay office was not far away, and about 75 yards from it he found Mr. Fuller lying at the foot of some steps. He was still breathing but died in a few minutes, before the arrival of a doctor, who had been hastily summoned by telephone. He had on one hand an asbestos mitt, and in the other a sandwich, while near where he fell the small tongs, with which he handled the cupels when assaying, were found. On the table in the assay office were several beakers, containing fluids, and one had been capsized. The fluid spilled was pronounced by other chemists as potassium cyanide. The conclusion was that while attending to his assay work, Mr. Fuller was also eating his lunch and made a mistake in drinking from the cyanide beaker instead of the one containing water. A coroner's jury, after enquiring into the circumstances, returned a verdict of accidental death. Mr. Fuller received his first mining education at the Camborne School of Mines, Cornwall, leaving there to go to Rossland, whence he accompanied Mr. A. J. McMillan

from London in 1904. Ever since, with the exception of short periods spent in Rhodesia and Mexico, respectively, on mining engineering business, he had been employed in various capacities at the Le Roi mine. For several years he was chief engineer, under Mr. A. G. Larson, superintendent. He was held in high regard by all with whom he came in contact, and the management bears willing testimony to his ability as an engineer. He was to have been married in June, proximo. The body was interred at Vancouver, B.C.

Capt. B. A. Wroughton, commander of B division of the Northwest Mounted Police, Dawson, Yukon Territory, when in Vancouver, B.C., last month, was reported to have told a newspaper representative, among other things, that "There was very little mining on the creeks during the winter by private individuals, as the rich ground has been pretty thoroughly worked out. Properties have now mostly passed into the control of large corporations which successfully adopt modern hydraulicking and dredging methods during the summer months. The outlook is bright, and the output this season promises to surpass the figures of recent years. There are enormous areas of ground available, and, in fact, the supply of gold is almost inexhaustible. At least twenty dredges will be in commission this season, the majority operated by the Yukon Gold Company, controlled by the Guggenheims. The Boyle outfit last fall completed a gold dredge which has the distinction of being the largest in existence. It will operate this year for the first time on Bear Creek, where the pay dirt is rich."