

in the world. So there you have the whole matter in a nutshell."

"And the Chinese are good workers underground?" I asked.

"Yes," replied my friend, the tallyman, "they are very careful, much more so, generally, than white men, and here's an example: A miner wanted some tools that had been left in a drift where no work had been done for some days, so he ordered his Chinaman to go and get them. The Chinaman obeyed, but before starting he put his lamp down, and groped his way in the dark, returning with the tools. Now I think very few white men would observe so much caution as that. Still, the slope is remarkably free from gas, and it is very unlikely that an explosion will ever occur. You see it is very damp in the mine,

On the other hand he makes a decidedly more desirable citizen in the white man's country; he lives in some degree of comfort and decency, and he spends his money freely when he works—something no one will accuse John Chinaman of doing.

When No. 5 shaft, situated rather less than a mile west of town, was started, it was expected that good coal would be encountered at a depth of 500 feet from

the surface, but, as a matter of fact, this No. 5 mine has not turned out as satisfactory as might have been wished. The coal is extremely "dirty," and faults have been constantly met with. In places, notably to the south, where the "long wall" principle of work is carried out, good coal is found where clear of faults, and it is possible, that as the mine is further developed, a better



A VIEW AT NO. 4 SLOPE, UNION.

and this keeps the dust down."

I talked with several other miners on this question of Mongolian labour, and I confess I was considerably astonished to find that they all expressed much the same opinion as the tallyman. Still, it must not be forgotten that the New Vancouver Coal Company, of Nanaimo, pay their miners good wages, and yet do not employ Chinese underground. It is rather interesting, meanwhile, to compare the respective merits of the Chinese and the Japanese as labourers. Undoubtedly from the employer's point of view the Chinaman is to be preferred—he is a steadier workman, possesses perhaps rather more physical strength than the Jap., and, as a rule, he does a better day's work. The Jap resembles more closely the inferior class of white labourer; he is, moreover, of an independent disposition, and inclined to give himself airs.

class of coal, and in uninterrupted measures, will be reached. The mine is handsomely equipped with the best modern machinery, and ventilated on the separate split system, by a large Guibal fan, worked by steam. Right on the townsite of Cumberland, a new double-compartment shaft, known as No. 6, is being sunk. During the time of my visit the men had just reached bedrock at a depth of about ten feet, and timbering was about to be started. All the ground in the vicinity has been thoroughly prospected with diamond drills, and coal is generally struck at between 450 and 600 feet from the surface. It is not difficult to see that the development of the Union collieries will add materially to the wealth of Vancouver Island, but when conditions demand the extension of the E. & N. Railway to Comox, and thence to Alberni, the output from the collieries will be considerably greater.