

necting the Crow's Nest Pass Railway will be built. At present a force of thirty-five men are employed sinking a double compartment shaft at a point north of the old workings, and a new hoist is to be shortly installed. Tenders have meanwhile been called for the work of hauling 1,000 tons of ore to the railway, and a "snow" road is being built for this purpose. Excellent reports have been received of the progress of work at the Sullivan group. This mine is being very extensively developed, and will shortly be equipped with a steam hoist and other machinery.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

*The Editor does not hold himself responsible for the opinions which may be expressed in this column. No notice will be taken of communications unless accompanied by the full name and address of the writer.*

#### COST OF FREIGHTING TO DAWSON.

**TO THE EDITOR:**—May I call your attention to evidently a typographical error in the article entitled, "Boat Building at Bennett," which appeared in your last issue, with reference to the cost per ton of freighting supplies to Dawson by barge. You state that "the cost per ton is from \$160 to to \$200, including the purchase of barge," in place of which there is an actual saving of this amount to those adopting this plan of conveying freight as against steamboat charges.

H. R. ELLA,

Secretary V. Y. T. Co., Victoria.

#### THE CIVIL SERVICE IN CANADA.

**TO THE EDITOR:**—I was glad to notice in last month's issue of the MINING RECORD an article pointing out the desirability of a change in our system of civil service appointments.

We have constant threats on changes of Provincial Governments in Canada—our own being no exception—of the introduction from the States of the detestable "spoils" system into the civil service, with a resulting displacement of officials on political grounds. Although it is to be hoped that in our own case there is no sufficient cause for such a fear, nothing would more certainly guard against the adoption of a bad "spoils" policy than such reform of our civil service administration as would base on merit, duly ascertained by practical tests, appointments to Provincial Government offices. Thus it is an open secret that most of our Government gold commissioners and mining recorders owe their appointments more to past influence or accident of circumstances than to actual personal capacity, although very many perhaps must, amongst them, discharge their duties well, and certainly none should be displaced without very good cause. Civil service appointments, when properly made, should be for life on good conduct, the latter including continuing efficiency. But how much better would it be for our community, and how much safer for officials themselves, were appointees in future required to fulfil some proper test of likely efficiency, and then, after appointment, given security of tenure. How vastly improved moreover would some of our official reports of gold commissioners and recorders become were future appointees to such offices men of mining knowledge and experience—experts, in fact, in their way.

N. S.

Vancouver, B. C.

#### ASSAY VALUES vs. SMELTER RETURNS.

**TO THE EDITOR:**—May I beg the favor of a little space wherein to reply to Messrs. Fortier and Warner's criticism of my remarks on "Assay vs. Smelter Values of Ore," which appeared recently?

I must congratulate those gentlemen in being interested in a property that possesses such exceptional facilities for working and shipment to Swansea, and in this particular instance, or with claims situated equally favourably, I am willing to admit that my estimate of the smelter value is rather too low. However, a very fair average rule in British Columbia is to knock off, say, \$20.00 per ton from the assay value of your ore to cover mining, freight and treatment, though in this especially favoured locality at Quatsino less allowance need be made.

In the face of all the advantages claimed by Messrs. Fortier and Warner it certainly does seem very strange that capital

should be holding back, for one would naturally think, if all these statements are correct, that a company could be formed to work the claims first and then erect their own smelter on the site without the slightest hesitation. If it is not trespassing too far upon the time of those gentlemen, it might interest your readers to know if Messrs. Fortier and Warner took those samples themselves, or entrusted that most particular duty to a third party in their presence (it would not be possible that such veins were sampled in their absence), and if they considered the samples as fairly indicating the average composition of the ledges. I notice the samples are spoken of as surface rock only, and such a remarkable showing in such a splendid locality makes one anxious to learn all further particulars.

That district is not peculiar in being well adapted for tunnels, as much of British Columbia partakes somewhat strongly of that character; but a tunnel is undoubtedly the best way of getting ore (and water) out when the vein will admit of such a method of working.

My object in writing the first article (in your September number) was, however, not at all to decry the evidently valuable property at Quatsino, but rather to correct a far too common error of valuing the ore by the assay returns instead of by the probable smelter returns; and I took the case quoted more as an example of what may usually be expected, though, perhaps, rather unfortunately in this particular instance.

Many and many a man has come to me in the way of business with a chunk of brown quartz the size of his head, and has pointed out with awe one poor, lonely little speck of free gold the size of a pin's point—so small one did not dare to look too closely for fear of it turning out to be pyrites or mica; but granting it really was gold, the assay value might very likely show "a trace," whilst the smelter would present you with a bill of \$10.00 for smelting.

If, only by repeated warning and illustration, I may be the means of bringing claim-owners to take the practical and sensible view that their ore must be valued by the smelter and not by the assayer, much good will result, and possible purchasers on the one hand will not be scared out of their wits by the absurd figures asked; nor will the prospector (who fully deserves all the good luck he gets, and more) think he owns the earth because he gets a \$20.00 assay from a piece of surface rock. No doubt, with the advent of more smelters, even if small ones, and the now assured reduced price of fuel, the much too high charges for smelting will be moderated; but in all cases, such as this Quatsino property, and some that are well spoken off in Boundary Creek, after having proved the continuity of your vein, and by development work proved also the quantity of ore you can supply daily (without stopping development work)—then, when you have enough ore out to run your smelter for a year, and at least another year's supply "in sight," put up your own smelter, and with anything like scientific and economical management a sure and certain fortune will be the result.

Trusting to hear more of this Quatsino property, and apologizing for the length of this letter, I am, yours truly,

Nelson, B. C.

A. H. HOLDICH.

#### MINE MANAGEMENT—A SENSIBLE SUGGESTION.

**TO THE EDITOR:**—During the last few years there have been many cases in the courts instigated by men working in the mines, to recover damages against their employers for injury received while fulfilling their duties. In nearly every case the company or employer has been determined the aggressor. This tells a tale, namely, that in many mines the lives of the working men are not protected as they should be. It is only human nature that the employer should not take more precautions to provide against accidents than he is forced to, because such provisions would necessarily increase his expenses. An Act called "Inspection for securing the safety and good health of workmen engaged in or about the metalliferous mines," was passed at the last session of the Provincial Legislature, and as a result an inspector was appointed for the whole Province, to enforce compliance with the Act. In all countries there are stringent rules laid down and enforced for coal mines, and those in charge, both managers and foremen, have to hold certificates of ability, but there is no reason why other mines should be on a different footing. The men's lives are endangered equally from badly protected shafts, upraises or stopes. A man may be as easily killed if the hoisting gear, pumps, ladderways or roof supports are out of order, if the ventilation is bad and regulations for safe blasting are not enforced. The public are protected from incompetence in the case of doctors, steamboat officers and engineers, and even of lawyers and surveyors. Why then in mining are the