

every instance the reports appear favourable, even though not always convincing. Thus reporting on Cunningham Creek properties, Mr. James Champion says:

"Having lived in this district for twelve years I am personally acquainted with all the miners working on Cunningham Creek at present, and the lowest estimate they gave me was 50 cents per cubic yard, and the majority of them said they were positive it would pay \$1 per cubic yard."

This, therefore, is not the report of Mr. Champion, but of miners working on the creek. Then again, Mr. J. J. Nickson, "M.E.," states of the same ground: "The gravel has been prospected, and values of \$1 to the cubic yard have been found on benches up to 100 feet high, and above that 45 cents per cubic yard. The quantity of water available for hydraulic work is more than required . . . . . This property handled carefully would become one of the greatest revenue-producing hydraulic mines in the world."

It is not evidently thought worth while to mention by whom the "gravel was prospected," which surely is here the only matter of importance. In fact, Mr. Nickson appears to have a penchant for making statements of this nature, for he also reports on a Cariboo Lake dredging lease:

"The cost of dredging such material as we have will not exceed 3 cents per cubic yard. While I believe many parts of the bars will pay probably \$5 to the yard, I think that 50 cents per cubic yard would be a reasonable estimate." "He considers," it is added, "that with such an immense deposit, if the estimate were only 20 cents to the yard, an immense revenue would accrue, namely, \$50,500,000 after deducting 3 cents per cubic yard for operating expenses."

But what tests have been made in support of these assertions?

Then reporting on three claims on French Creek, Mr. Champion is quoted as follows:

"I do not consider this a mere prospect, nor a partially developed property; the records in the Gold Commissioner's Office will show that hundreds of thousands of dollars have been taken both above and below the property, now referred to, in fact some of the richest that have been in Cariboo are adjacent to this property . . . . . By taking advantage of the work that has been done . . . . . I think there will be no difficulty in finding the channel, and when once found there is no doubt whatever as to its richness."

We, however, are quite at a loss to understand how a claim that has in no sense been developed, can be anything else but a prospect, even though Mr. Champion "thinks" there will be no difficulty in finding the channel.

We could easily give many more examples of a similar character, but exigencies of space forbid. Meanwhile, it is sufficient to say that even Mr. Campbell and Mr. Thompson qualify every one of their statements with "ifs" and "whens." They "think," and "are informed," and "consider," but there is hardly an extract from any of the reports quoted in the prospectus of a definite or emphatic nature, showing that opinion is based on actual tests. Great stress is laid on the fact that the properties being practically within a radius of twenty miles can be economically controlled by one central management, but when it is remembered that this implies a distance of forty miles between some of the claims in a

country where travel is difficult, we imagine that it will be at least found necessary, in the event of the acquisition of these properties by the Cariboo Consolidated, Limited, to have a well-paid official, responsible for the gold output, in charge at each of the claims.

In estimating the profits of the venture, the directors of this company consider that when the properties are "fully equipped and in working order, the claims will speedily arrive at a position to return handsome profits upon the capital of the company." This capital is roughly one million, seven hundred thousand dollars, of which one million and a quarter is to go into the pockets of the vendors and promoters. A balance of half-a million dollars therefore remains with which to "thoroughly equip" and put "in working order" an approximate area of miners ground of over twelve thousand acres, exclusive of five miles of dredging rights. A well-managed Canadian Company, the Consolidated Cariboo has taken several years to equip one property, and the cost thereof to date has been considerably over a million dollars.

The 8-hour law question still takes precedence of all others in the Slocan, and a speedy adjustment of the point of disagreement between employers and employees still seems most doubtful. All unprejudiced people will agree that the Unions are behaving most unreasonably, for when the Slocan Star Mining Company offered the men the liberal and proportionately higher wage of three dollars and a quarter for an 8-hour working day, it was unhesitatingly refused. No one, we opine, under such circumstances, would call the Slocan mine-owners to account if they decide to seek elsewhere for mine-workers. There is, however, one way of settling the difficulty to the satisfaction of both sides, and the suggestion has not previously, we think, been made. At the Hall Mines work has not been suspended, because much of the labour there is done by contract. The system of working a mine by contract has many advantages, and in many cases where it has been tried in this country the result has proved eminently satisfactory to both the mine-operators and the miners employed. In one mine on Texada Island, where this system has been recently introduced, drifting that cost \$16 per foot by day labour is now done for \$8, and at the same time the men earn no less than formerly. In many mines in other countries even the "mucking" is carried on under contract. If the Slocan miners are prepared to prove their statement that a man can do as much work underground in eight as in ten hours, the contract system should certainly meet with their approval. Since the above paragraph was put in print we observe that two or three mines in the Nelson district have adopted the contract system in employing labour, and others will follow suit.

Meanwhile the Union organizer in the Slocan, Mr. Wilkes, has stated, as the representative of the miners, his views on the question, which briefly are: That it is unreasonable of the mine-owners to reduce wages for an eight-hour day to \$3, because (1st) the men will accomplish more "in proportion to the hours worked in an eight-hour day than they will in a ten-hour day;" (2nd) that under the old system the men did not actually work more than nine hours; (3rd) that the "eight-hour day will only reduce the working hours of any mine—two shifts—from 19 to 16 hours, instead of from 20 to 16 hours as generally supposed;"