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A. M. FRASER,  
MANAGER OF THE CRITIC, HALIFAX, N. S.

## MINING.

We desire to call especial attention to the letter of Mr. J. E. Wilson, in re "Deep Mining." Mr. Wilson, from his personal experience in Australia, and his practical knowledge of mining, is well qualified to write on the subject, and we note with pleasure that, although he approaches with due caution, the inference to be drawn from his letter is decidedly favorable to the experiment of deep mining in Nova Scotia. Mr. Gilpin, the Deputy Commissioner and Inspector of Mines, who is noted for his thorough knowledge of the subject, and also for his caution, shows in his recent paper on "The gold-bearing veins of Nova Scotia," to which we referred in our last issue, that the conditions permitting the formation of veins extended far below any mining operations yet undertaken here.

Authorities are multiplying, tending to prove the practicability of the theory that gold will likely be found at great depths, and we trust that a company, organized on a somewhat similar plan to the one proposed by "Deep Miner," may soon be in operation.

That it will pay the Government to assist such a company goes without saying, and Australia, as Mr. Wilson shows, furnishes a good precedent in such a course.

### To the Editor of the Critic:

DEEP MINING FOR GOLD IN NOVA SCOTIA—WILL IT PAY?—In reading an article in the last issue of THE CRITIC on the above subject, where reference is made to the deep mines of Australia, I am induced to furnish some facts and statistics in relation to those mines, gathered partly from Australian papers within the last two or three years, and also from my personal knowledge of the locality in years past, which possibly you may find of sufficient interest to your readers to publish.

I will confine myself to one district, viz. Sandhurst, (Old Bendigo) which, without doubt, is the richest and most extensive quartz mining district in Australia, and possibly in the world.

It may not be out of place just here to go back and trace the early development of quartz mining in Bendigo. The first discovery of gold there dates back to 1851. Then it was entirely alluvial digging, shallow sinking and very rich. Quartz mining was not known, and very little attention was given to quartz reefs until some years after, though the presence of gold in quartz was very apparent, for I well remember in the winter of 1853 of breaking off fine gold specimens from out-cropping reefs which afterwards developed into bonanzas.

At that time general attention was directed to the alluvial washings. There were no means of extracting the gold from quartz but by hammer. There was not a quartz mill in Australia, but in a year or so, as the alluvial began to fall off in yield, more attention was given to quartz. Then the Chillian, or old Mexican Rotary Mill, was introduced by Californian miners. Soon quartz mining became a recognized business. Money was made in the palmy days of the washings.

Mills were erected in quartz districts to crush for the public. They enabled miners to prospect and develop mines at a small outlay. Only feet on the line of reef was allowed to each man, and he was compelled to work or forfeit it. No "dog in the manger" policy there as in N.S. where any one may hold mining areas indefinitely for a small fee, with working. By this means the country became well developed.

In the course of time, as a depth of 100 to 200 feet was reached, the yield began to fall off, and the leads apparently to run out. Up to this time they had been worked by small parties of two to six men. Those who made money did not care to risk it in prospecting for deeper pay shafts. Moreover, about that time a celebrated geologist, (I think Sir Rodolph Murchison,) visited Australia, and gave it as his opinion that paying reefs would not be found at a depth of 500 feet.

(In the article you quote, this opinion is attributed to old mining experts. On this I beg to take issue, as I never heard such an opinion expressed by an Australian miner. As a rule they are not so presumptuous but more inclined to hold to Job's theory: "that gold is where you find it.")

New gold fields at that time being discovered in other parts of the Colony, drew off the population. Trade decreased, values lessened, and once famous Bendigo was considered worked out. However, some persevered, went deeper, and were rewarded. Then came a revival; the companies were formed to re-work the old mines. Shares were placed even at a few shillings, and were thus brought within the reach of many who never handled the pick and shovel became interested in the trade. The merchant from Melbourne, the local store keeper, small farmer, tradesmen, etc., partook of the speculative spirit, and could talk scrip, calls, dividends, etc., as glibly as the old miner. What was the result? Strange to say, richer discoveries were made than ever before, and were proved by the experience of 25 years? The rapid advance of Sandhurst wealth and population; that paying mines are being worked to a depth of 2,000 feet, with about 180 stock companies, as perfectly organized as city banks, and the stocks of which are daily quoted in the local and Melbourne papers. Of the 180 mining companies, fully half are being worked at depths varying from 600 to 2,000 feet. The yield of these companies in the year 1885 was 216,772 ounces, paying dividends, above all expenses, of \$750,000, not including a few private companies, one of which cleared that year £20,000 sterling. I am quoting from Sandhurst papers.

The question of deep sinking is very naturally more considered in Australia than here, and the Bendigo Advertiser, in referring to the conditions of the year 1885, remarks as follows:—

"The developments during the year has been of much importance, especially as we have now remarkable and indisputable evidence that deep ground carries gold bearing reefs."

It then refers to five of the deepest mines, all of which were