

According to a correspondent in whom we have every confidence, the properties owned in the Nelson district by the Maple Leaf Mining and Development Company, to which we made reference last month, are far from unpromising and certainly should not be described as "wild-cats." Our correspondent writes:

"While in the White Grouse I found ten men at work on one of this company's claims (the Bullion) developing and taking out some of the finest looking copper ore it was ever my lot to see. For the amount of work done they had a surprising quantity of ore on the dump and there seems to be no end to the lead from which the ore was taken. Shipments, I hear, are to be commenced as soon as a new road is built, and it is now well under way. As a rule I am not very enthusiastic, but it would do a *real* mining man good to see this Bullion claim—the ledge and the dump of ore. This Goat River country has been 'knocked' repeatedly without cause, and it should be stopped. My twelve years in this particular district should count for something. Eh? As regards this Maple Leaf Mining Co., I don't know anything about it one way or another, have no interests in it; never even saw its prospects, but I do know that they have property that they need not be ashamed of."

In addition to the White Grouse claims, the company also owns, our correspondent adds, a good property in the Black Prince, a silver-lead mine in East Kootenay. But what a pity the prospectus should contain such nonsense as, for example, this: "Of the surrounding mines, the Le Roy mine and the Silver King are owned by the Rothschilds, the well-known European bankers, employing more than 3,000 men to work these mines. Another surrounding (*sic*) mine, the Ymir, is paying over \$75,000.00 a month in dividends, and stock in all these companies is hardly obtainable at any price." And this, being an extract from a letter signed by F. J. Hartman, a Catholic priest: "I consider the value of this property of enormous possibilities and feel confident that this investment will turn out a great wealth producer." What on earth does he know about it! And again this exaggerated statement inviting the public to subscribe for the stock: "Considering the able and reliable management and the enormous value of the holdings of the Maple Leaf Mining and Development Co., it can be stated that there has never been placed before the public a proposition of such enormous possibilities as there is offered to investors in stock of these mines. Already \$20,000 has been spent upon development to find out in what direction the ore bodies lay. Two tunnels sunk (*sic*) in one claim, the Maple Leaf, reveal rich thick veins of gold ore in sight, estimated amounting to over \$3,000,000." Any intelligent man would naturally come to the conclusion that a company so adventurous as to sink two tunnels in one claim, was very likely to prove a sink itself—for other people's money. But, if as our correspondent suggests, the undertaking is a *bona fide* one, we

would strongly advise the immediate suppression of the prospectus.

The "jumping" of the Cody Fraction, a claim in the Slocan upon which a great deal of money has been spent both in the ground and in the courts, affords us the excuse of again calling the attention of the Government to the faults and injustice of a system which imposes so heavy a penalty as complete forfeiture of valuable property for failure to make a purely conventional declaration of work done and the payment of a fee of \$2.50 for so doing. What was remarked in a former issue when this subject was being dealt with applies here. "Were this an isolated instance it might be argued that some extraordinary negligence on the part of the company or owners had taken place and that if people would not pay \$2.50 to preserve title to very valuable property they deserved to lose it. Which is very true, but unfortunately this is not an isolated case. Others have occurred and have had a bad effect on the interests of British Columbia through disgusting men who had invested large sums of money in this province. And this is the point of view from which the matter should be judged, not that it is the business of the Legislature to protect those too negligent to carry out the conditions under which mineral rights are held, but to protect the interests of the Province by making these conditions as plain and simple as possible, and by minimizing the risk of forfeiture and its heavy losses as much as possible." At the same time we made the following suggested amendments to the Act:—

(1.) The failure to record assessment work on or before the expiration of the present time-limit shall not render the property liable to forfeiture, but omission in this respect shall be punishable by fine on a system of cumulative penalties. For instance, if a record is made within one month after the legal limit, a fine of, say, five dollars, shall be imposed; if within three months, the sum to be paid shall be fifteen dollars, or twenty-five dollars if the extreme limit of the six months' extension is not exceeded. After six months the property should revert to the Crown.

(2.) No location or mineral claim on which one assessment, or work to the appraised value of one hundred dollars, has been performed, shall be "jumpable" or open to re-location, but shall revert as a claim with designated boundaries to the Crown. At stated periods, of which adequate notice must be given, properties thus forfeited shall be sold at public auction by the Gold Commissioner or Mining Recorder of the district, a minimum reserve price being placed on every claim thus offered for sale.

(3.) The present clause relating to the location and recording of mineral claims should be repealed,