

GOLD MINING INTELLIGENCE.

It may perhaps be pretty fairly presumed that the rumour of an attempt at a compromise between the rival claimants to the Richardson mine—like most of the other rumours about the Gold Region and its affairs—had but a slight foundation in fact. And for this reason, that the law seems to be still taking its course. We understand that on Wednesday, in the Court of Chancery in Toronto, an order was made upon the Belleville claimants to pay \$35,000 into court within seven days. Unless they do so, the injunction for which they have applied, restraining Messrs. Lombard & Co. from working the mine until the trial comes on, will lapse. The state of the case is, consequently, becoming decidedly interesting.

The Rochester Union recently put forth a statement that the barrels taken to that city from Madoc, and represented to contain gold in dust and quartz, were only filled with mud scraped from the bottom of the Richardson mine! As the Union was altogether wrong in its account of other matters, relating to the conflicting claims to the mine, its muddy version is probably equally imaginary and as far from the real fact.—It is somewhat singular, however, that so far, nothing more authentic has yet been made public as to the actual value of the contents of the barrels, or of the disposal which has been made of them.

On Saturday last, the rain ceased, and the roads began to dry up with wonderful rapidity. The prospect of fair weather proved to be delusive, as it began to rain again before daylight on Monday, and continued until Thursday. Visitors from a distance have consequently had a hard time of it, and some who came to see "the mines," have gone home no wiser than when they arrived.

The suspicion that the "raid" on the Richardson Mine was merely concocted to keep up the "excitement," and the cautious which have been based thereupon by the press at a distance, have of course had some effect upon travel. We admit that the suspicion was a natural one, considering that wonderful accounts have been written by correspondents of papers published far out of the limits of Hastings County, of gold having been found here, there, and everywhere, of which we have not been able to obtain satisfactory proof. And yet the charge, in our opinion, is unfounded, as the principals, on both sides, appeared to be actuated by genuinely unfriendly feelings towards each other, from remarks they made to us.—Let it be understood, though, that we claim no monopoly of "news." Strangers to ourselves, interested in claims owned at a distance, will of course, communicate with their friends in the first place; but no discovery, of real importance, can be made in this district, without its becoming "generally known," and communicated to those who will keep us "posted up."

"Straws," it is said, "will show which way the wind blows." As a proof that there is plenty of faith that in spite of all sinister reports, numbers will yet visit the Quinte Gold Mining Division, we may mention that a considerable amount of money has this week been paid to the License Inspector of Madoc for tavern licenses. As there is still the liability to the government fee in addition, it is evident that those who have invested in tavern property, do not consider their chances nearly "played out."

Col. Campbell finds there is an increasing demand for licenses, and on Thursday he issued quite a number of tavern as well as mining licenses.

Mr. John Cooke, it is said, has sold the rear portion of his farm—lot 19 in the 8rd concession—for a sum, variously reported at from \$4,000 to \$5,000, and a share of the gold that may be obtained hereafter.

Mr. Lombard has commenced to work another claim, on lot 26 in the 4th concession of Madoc. James Morrison, Esq., of Morrison, Taylor & Co. Toronto, on Thursday visited the "Cariboo" Mine, at Bannockburn, in company with Mr. L. Kennedy, P.L.S., of Madoc. A pan of the earth from the mine was washed in their presence, and yielded the very satisfactory result of twenty particles of gold.

Mr. Obadiah Johnson has shown this week a very fine specimen of gold in a small piece of quartz, which he broke off from a boulder lying within a few rods of the Richardson Mine. There can be no doubt of the richness of that locality.

There is now more enquiry on the part of speculators for the purchase of mining lands, with more moderate views on the part of holders of real estate.

Mr. James Fitzgerald has under consideration an inquiry whether he would accept an offer of \$2,000 for a lot in Huntingdon, near the mine at Downey's Rapids.

MADOC GOLD MINING CO OF TORONTO—Mr. T. S. Chandler, a gentleman of considerable mining experience, now acting as managing director of the Madoc Gold Mining Co. of Toronto, has this week commenced operations on Lot 17 in the 7th concession of Madoc, and has already found a show of gold on the surface, and considers the Co.'s prospects on this land to be of a very encouraging nature. As he intends prosecuting the development of the said claim with all possible speed, he feels confident of ultimate success.

Since our last expression has been given to the dissatisfaction mentioned as prevailing with regard to some of the provisions of the Gold Mining Act. A memorial to the Governor-General has been adopted, after consultation by several landowners. I see of lands miners and others interested, briefly setting forth the points in which the act operates rigorously and injuriously. The memorial lies for signature at the Royal Hotel.—Resolutions, very much to the same effect as to license fees, increased dimensions of claims, &c., were adopted on Friday evening last, at a meeting of practical miners held at Hudgins' hotel. For some reason, no general notice of this meeting was given to the people of this village, and besides the Chairman, A. F. Wood, Esq., who is not a practical miner, there were not half a dozen old residents present.—If the evils complained of are remedied, however, without the people being compelled to call a public meeting, so much the better.—*Madoc Mercury.*

BREADSTUFFS—THE PROSPECT.

NOTWITHSTANDING the continued flow of California Wheat and Flour in this direction, prices of these food staples still maintain a rising tendency—a fact that attests the absolute scarcity existing in all the old sources of supply. Many of the best informed of the trade were slow to believe in an actual scarcity of Bread Stuffs in the West, till the conviction was actually forced by the logic of events. It was, for a long time, popularly believed that though last season's crop of Wheat was considerably curtailed by excessive wet weather during the harvest, there would yet be an ample supply for the wants of home consumption, but the great fact that the surplus of the previous year had become well-nigh exhausted before the yield of 1866 appeared upon the market, seems to have been lost sight of, even by some of the most sagacious observers. Not only the South—many portions of which were absolutely bare of supplies—but such States as Ohio and Indiana, which had heretofore been more than self-sustaining, in this particular, were forced to draw upon Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, &c.; and this drain, which has been steadily, though almost imperceptibly, going on for many months, has led to rapid exhaustion of stocks, and a consequent range of prices which seems almost incredible in a great agricultural country. The quantity of Wheat and Flour in Chicago, Milwaukee, and other leading markets of the West, is unusually light for the season, and there is reason to believe that very little, if any, of either will find its way to the seaboard before harvest, since the relatively higher prices at intermediate points can hardly fail to keep back that which might otherwise reach New York, Boston and Philadelphia. A large number of the Western farmers, tempted by unusual gains, appear to have exhausted their reserves and the curious aspect is now presented, in some sections, of the producers purchasing Wheat at a considerable advance upon the prices they had realized for their own products. In some sections of Iowa, for instance, so great is the dearth of supplies that the credit of several counties has actually been pledged for seed, as high as \$3.50 per bushel having been paid for Spring Wheat!

In view of this state of affairs, the progress of the growing crops will be watched with much more than the usual degree of interest, for upon the yield of cereals the current season, will largely depend the material prosperity of all branches of business, and the future ruling of commercial values. It was naturally to be supposed, an unusually high range of Bread Stuffs has wonderfully stimulated the efforts of the farming classes, in all directions, and, with a re-inforcement of the labour ranks, and the rapid progress of the multiplicity of labour-saving implements, there is every reason to believe that we shall have, with a propitious season, the largest yield of grain ever garnered in this country. The maxim that he who causes two blades of grass to grow where but one grew before, is a public benefactor was, probably, never more generally acted upon by the agricultural classes than during the present season, and though unforeseen circumstances may again conspire to limit the harvests, the circumstances are so favourable that any great drawbacks seem highly improbable. In about six weeks new Wheat should make its appearance from the South, and thenceforward there will probably be uninterrupted receipts of new crop, though the question of supply will hardly be solved before the last of August, or the first of September. Should present promises be fully realized, as regards the crops, money will again flow through all the arteries of commerce, a healthful impetus will be imparted to railroads, shipping and the varied industries, and many of those difficulties which now beset merchants and business men will, without doubt, disappear, or be, in a great degree, mitigated. Meanwhile we shall continue to receive considerable supplies of Wheat and Flour from California. Our San Francisco correspondent, writing under date of 17th ult., says that all the room by the steamers to Panama has been taken up to the last of June for Flour; that prices promised to go to \$8 or \$9; that there was some half a million of sacks of Wheat left, which, however, would probably be cleared out by the middle of the last of May, and that the prospects for another great yield there were never better. The agricultural promise for 1867, then, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, so far as can be judged, at this early period, is highly favourable, and a realization of present anticipations can hardly fail to be followed by a speedy culmination in the prevailing business depression, since it is pretty generally understood that the abnormal condition of trade is largely due to a lack of staple products—the banking interests being simply the agents or auxiliaries to that labour and industry which create wealth, and a healthy state of commercial affairs.

P. S.—Since the above was in type, the market for Flour and Wheat has turned in favour of the buyer, while Corn has undergone a heavy decline.—*N. Y. Shipping List.*

PORT WINE.

M. Oswald Crawford, Her Majesty's Consul at Oporto, devotes his annual report to the Foreign Office this year to the subject of the port wine trade. He quotes Mr. Croft, a Yorkshire wine merchant, who wrote in 1727, as fixing the date of the first use of true port wine in England at "about the reign of Queen Anne." The Methuen treaty of 1703, imposing a discriminating duty in favour of the wines of Portugal, fostered the consumption of port wine in England, and a corresponding use of British manufactures in Portugal. The taste for port became established. The actual importation of this wine into England has suffered no material change for the last 57 years. There has been a very great increase in the consumption of other wines, but port has maintained its actual quantity. "The true port wine," he says, "is grown in a narrow strip of country along both banks of the river

Douro. The greatest length of this district is 26 miles, and it lies nearly due east and west with the course of the river; its average width is six miles. The geological formation is a peculiar brown slaty schist, and the country is a series of lofty and precipitous hills. The grapes are gathered, not as in France, when they are merely ripe, but only after they have lost some part of their water by their continued exposure to the sun, and when, therefore, they are beginning to dry up into raisins, by which process the sugar and other ingredients in the grape, and subsequently in the wine, are developed in larger proportions to the watery particles; resembling in this respect those richer and very expensive wines (too costly for commercial purposes) which are known in France as 'vin de paille,' and are produced from grapes gathered in the usual way, but allowed to ripen afterwards in the heat of the sun. The vintage takes place, according to the season, from the 29th of September to the 10th of October. The wine-making, though at first sight primitive, is in all essential particulars very cautiously and skillfully performed. The over-ripe or inferior grapes being picked out, the rest are easily thrown into a large stone-built vat (*lagar*). Into this as many men as can easily find room enter and tread out the juice. The men stay in from 20 to 30 hours; the must is then allowed to stand until a thorough fermentation has taken place. At the fitting moment, judged either by the experience of the wine-maker, or more precisely by the use of the *glucosometre*, the wine is run into the tunnels which may contain from 5 to 30 pipes. It is now that a small portion of brandy is added, as is also done with sherry and madeira, to prevent the wine, containing as it does so many rich ingredients, from running into an excessive fermentation, and so losing too much of its saccharine matter. The necessity or expediency of so adding spirit at this stage of the process has been disputed by persons only theoretically conversant with the process of wine-making; but it is difficult to apply preconceived theories to the subject in the presence of persons who have made it the business of their lives, whose interest it is to use as little spirit as possible, who are singularly free from prejudice, and whose continual efforts have been to enforce improved and enlightened processes of manufacture and mode of cultivation upon the farmers. It is very certain that when made without brandy the wines of the Douro, even if they would keep, which is a disputed point, have not any of the softness or flavour of port wine, but are intermediate in character between claret and burgundy, without possessing either the delicate bouquet of the one, or the flavour and 'roundness' of the other. The wine remains in the tunnel until the fermentation is checked by the cold weather of autumn, as is shown by the wine becoming clear and bright. This will occur towards the middle of November. The wine is then run off into pipes, containing each 115 gallons, and is ready to bring down to Oporto. The wine is brought down the river Douro in the early spring months, the river transport costing about 8s. 10d. for each pipe, and is lodged in the warehouses of the merchants at Oporto. It is here kept until ready for shipment to England, seldom being fit for that purpose for at least 18 months." The chief cause of the prejudice which has arisen against the stronger wines, and of the reaction in favor of the lighter growths of France and other countries, is due, so far as port wine is concerned, to the writings of the late Mr. J. J. Forrester, a wine-grower in the port wine district and wine merchant of Oporto, and to the evidence given by him before a committee of the House of Commons. His argument was that port wine should be prepared entirely, as he asserted Burgundy and Bordeaux wines to be prepared entirely without the use of Brandy. Now, that port wines can be made without spirit remains to be proved; but to assume that French wines can be made so is quite erroneous, because French wine, if intended to keep, must be mixed with spirit. The wine merchants of Oporto assert that port wines contain so much more of those particles which constitute viscosity that it requires more spirit to preserve them than lighter wines. "The more thorough ripening of the grapes, caused partly by the admirable aspects of the vineyards in which they are grown, partly by the greater heat of the summer of Portugal, partly by the more complete pruning of the vines, and partly by the later gathering of the vintage, is such that, when placed in the press, each grape is, unlike the grapes used in French wine-making, one mass of saccharine matter. The juice of the grapes in this state forms a wine which, it is said, requires brandy in exact proportion to the fermentable and non-aqueous particles which it holds in suspension. It is certainly the case that the claret wines of Portugal require less brandy for their preservation than the richer wines of the upper Douro. These wines are made for consumption within twelve-month. If required to be kept longer, they have added to them a certain percentage of spirit, while the Douro wines, even those meant for consumption in the country, require nearly twice that percentage. That the amount used is the true necessary minimum might easily be argued from the fact that the Portuguese prefer light port wines and that the cost of brandy being ordinarily four times that of the young wine, the obvious interest of the native merchant would induce him to employ the least possible quantity of the more costly liquid. The wines of Bordeaux are, with the single exception of the limited growths of Hermitage, the only fine red wines of France which will bear exportation. Even they require the addition of spirit, as I have shown; but, even if they did not, it might be objected that no analogy could be drawn from them applicable to a liquid so entirely distinct as port wine. The richer wines of Burgundy far more nearly approach the character of port than those of the Bordeaux district, and if it could be shown that they could be preserved without spirit, it would be difficult to meet the argument thus raised. Unfortunately, these wines, equal, if not superior, in every respect to the best growths of the Medoc, are practically excluded from foreign consumption by the fact that they degenerate in a few years, sometimes in a few months. The admixture of