

world, it would take one month at least to send out any letter requisitioning materials." Mr. Rathbone himself left Omenica on the 24th June and arrived at Quesnelle on the 4th July, where there is telegraphic communication with the outside world.

It appears to us that in dealing with the questions of transportation, labour and supplies Mr. Rathbone has carefully refrained from alluding to the fact that very considerable development work preparatory to hydraulic mining, have been proceeding for some time in Omenica for which undertaking men, supplies and machinery, notwithstanding Mr. Rathbone's "insurmountable difficulties," have been transported to Omenica over what he describes as a "hardly discernable path cut through the virgin forest, strewn with fallen timber, and used only by a few desultory prospectors."

Enough has perhaps been said on this point, and we shall now pass on to the important portion of what he is pleased to call his "detailed" report dealing with his description, examination and valuation of the ground itself. It seems to us to be an extraordinary achievement to write a "detailed" description and report of such extensive properties within the space of half a foolscap page of typewritten matter, and in order that our readers may know what Mr. Rathbone's idea of a "detailed" report is we propose to produce it *in extenso* :

"The claims which were under offer to you are situated, as I have already stated, on Manson Creek, Lost Creek and Germansen Creek, and I carefully inspected all of them, devoting particular attention to those points where it was possible to examine any proper section of the beds. As, however, no preparatory work has been done in this way—that is, in making proper sections and tunnels to admit of a thorough examination—I was only able to take certain points. I, however, managed to make very careful panning at several points from the very bottom to the top of the gravel-beds, taking every few feet, and from a very large number of pannings taken in this way I found that there can, unfortunately, be no doubt that the gold is only to be found in very limited areas, usually in a bed two or three feet in thickness, the gravel lying above and below, being as a rule absolutely barren. In this bed I found that when it was worked together with the overlying and underlying gravel—from which, of course, it could not be separated—it would not average in most cases more than five cents per cubic yard, and frequently it would be much less. Now, as the cost of working in this district would be fully as much as it is in the Cariboo, where it is proved under far more favourable conditions to cost fully ten cents to the cubic yard, it is at once evident that these gravels are not nearly rich enough to pay even working expenses."

If this is a "detailed" report we may, we think, be pardoned for not discovering the details. Here are seventeen claims, each having an area of eighty acres and situated on three separate creeks at distances apart of from eight to ten miles, and the claims themselves in different localities on these creeks. Yet, Mr. Rathbone tells his employers that in a stay of a little more than a week he had "carefully inspected all of them." It will be noted, however, that he refers to none of the properties by name; that no plan accompanies the report showing where the pannings were taken; and that there is no record of any kind of the number of pannings made or of the results per pan. Furthermore, we leave it to any hydraulic miner or

engineer to say whether property of this character can be properly exploited by means of a pan only. Mr. Rathbone's explanation that he did not sink test-pits and take other measures to examine the ground because this preparatory work had not been performed by the vendors, appears to us to be to the last degree absurd, and we should like to ask him if were this the usual practice, what precaution would he take against the possibility of the mine being "salted?" Meanwhile, the following extracts from letters referring to the manner in which Mr. Rathbone conducted his examination are of interest: The first is from Mr. Fred W. Valteau, the Gold Commissioner of the Omenica district, and written with the approval of the Minister of Mines. Mr. Valteau writes:

I have read carefully Mr. Rathbone's report and I must say that I am very much surprised that a man having held the position he has could possibly write a report so much at variance with what is so well known of the country and the ground in question. Having spent the greater part of the last four years in the Omenica myself, and having travelled, spring, summer and winter, over the same route as Mr. Rathbone took, I cannot allow his statement that the trail from Quesnelle to Manson is such a very rough one.....to pass without contradiction.....Mr. Rathbone arrived at Manson on Sunday, June 12th, and a couple of days after began his work of inspection. Now, I note in his report he says he was "engaged in making a careful examination of the properties" on the Manson and Germansen Creeks until the 24th of June, when he left the district to return to England. Taking into consideration that the property under examination is situated upon three creeks, that these creeks are distant one from the other over eight miles, and the claims comprise an area of something over 1,300 acres, the time spent upon them, no matter how well it may have been employed, is, in my opinion, too short to enable any one to either recommend for purchase or condemn any property; and especially to condemn a whole district. The system of tests made by Mr. Rathbone was done by panning. No shafts were sunk, or cuts run in upon any portion of the ground, and in one particular point the ground sampled was a slide of gravel, where the samples taken were simply what had slid from the top of the bank at "grass roots."

The next letter is from Mr. Jarvett T. Richards, of Santa Barbara, California, President of the St. Anthony's Exploration Company, Limited, which has since purchased the properties Mr. Rathbone condemns. We take the following excerpt :

We hope to be in possession of the property formally by the 18th of January. Mr. Thompson's (the company's engineer) report to us showed that he had made a thorough examination in company with Mr. More, of the Germansen and Manson Creeks, taking into consideration the drifts made and other work done by parties who worked the shallow diggings twenty-five years ago, and also prospecting and panning the river beds and benches himself. Upon this examination he presented us such a showing as to area and richness of gravel, and comparatively limited expense of plant and current working that we determined to make the purchase from the Omenica company, believing that in so doing we secured property that will yield us sufficient to satisfy our ideas of profit. The property is bought and acquired by us as an investment to be worked by us, a close corporation, as an income yielding investment, and it is not for sale. Mr. Thompson is a practical and conservative man and he and all of use felt that we were acquiring a property sufficiently valuable for our purposes when we decided to acquire the Omenica holdings.

A third letter is from a well-known practical miner, Mr. Jack Kavanaugh, who owns and works claims in Omenica district. This we publish for what it is worth :

I met Mr. Rathbone at Manson Creek, Omenica District on the 16th of June, 1898.....After a short talk I came to realize that he was not a man who wanted to talk to a common miner, but I watched to see what he would do. Here Mr. Kavanaugh expresses his opinion too freely and his remarks are omitted for obvious reasons. Not