

be rendered a whit sounder or more accurate by the subscription of the most influential name in Manitoba. Conversely, weak logic, contradictions which disprove nothing, and uncalled for invective do not carry any more weight nor effect any purpose the better for being supported by the prestige of a name even as formidable as Mr. Van Allen's. Had my communication contained any charge or any personal reference I should have felt bound to accompany it with my name. It did not, however. I leave your readers, sir, to judge the dispute on its merits, not on the names of the disputants. Mr. Van Allen's reason for inviting me to disclose my identity is so obviously flimsy that although having no insuperable objection to signing my name, I do not feel that it is at all necessary, and beg to subscribe myself again.

MANITOBA MERCHANT.

Mining by Electricity.

The *Free Press*, published at Nanaimo, B. C., tells as follows of how coal mining is done at the Union mines, Vancouver Island, by electricity:—

A *Free Press* representative called on A. Dick Government Inspector of coal mines, on his return yesterday from an official visit to the Union Colliery at Comox. Mr. Dick then gave a description of the electric machine—the first of the kind he had seen—as wonderful and doing its work with the utmost ease and the precision of clock-work. He timed the machine while at work and found that it “mined” 6 feet by 39 inches, and four inches deep in five minutes. It also took five minutes from the time of finishing cut, until it commenced work on the next. To move it from one stall to another takes about half-an-hour. Mr. Dick expressed the opinion that it will greatly facilitate the mining of coal, and also that the coal will come out in a more merchantable condition. In fact Mr. Little, manager, and Mr. Russell, overman, said the refuse from the machine was not half that by the ordinary mode of mining.

D. N. Ozyor, electrician of the Jeffery Electrical Company, of Columbus, Ohio, is at present at Union placing the machinery in order, and instructing the operators. Mr. John Eid, is in charge of the cutting machine, having one helper, who with an engineer in charge of the dynamo, is the entire working force. The steam is supplied from the colliery boilers.

Mr. Ozyor expects to remain at Union about two weeks longer, and says that in the long wall system of coal mining the machine can do a much greater percentage of work than in the small stall system. The machine simply does the under-mining, then the miner has to come along, drill the holes, fire the shots, and load away the coal.

Following is a brief technical description of the machine as given by the manufacturer:

The machine consists of a bed frame occupying a space of 2 feet wide, by 8 feet 6 inches long, composed of two steel channel bars firmly braced, the top plates on each forming racks with their teeth downward, into which the feed wheels of the sliding frame engage. Mounted upon and engaging with this bed frame, is a sliding frame, similarly braced, consisting mainly of two steel bars, upon which are mounted at the rear ends, the electric motor, from which power is transmitted through straight gear and worm wheel to the rack, by means of

which the sliding frame is fed forward. Upon the front end of this sliding frame is mounted the cutter bar, held firmly by two solid steel shoes, with suitable brass boxes. The cutter-bar contains bits, made of tool steel, held in place by set screws. When the cutter-bar is revolved, these cutters or bits, cover its entire face. The cutter-bar is revolved by an endless curved link steel chain from the driving shaft, and as it is revolved, is advanced by the above mechanism into the coal or other material to be undercut to the desired depth.

The electric motor occupies a space of about 20 inches square, is built in the most workman-like manner, both mechanically and electrically. The current required 50 amperes at a pressure of 220 volts; the motor is wound to develop fully 15 H. P., though frequently in some veins of coal the machine only uses 30 amperes or 7½ H. P. in making cuts. The machine is started by means of a switch located on a suitable resistance box, on the rear end of the motor, the same being arranged with buttons; the current is gradually turned on by simply passing the lever over these buttons. The armature of the motor is calculated to run at a speed of 1,000 revolutions per minute, from which the speed is reduced so as to run the cutter-bar 200 revolutions per minute. The momentum of the armature is such, that ordinary obstructions met by the cutter-bar in the coal are not perceptible, causing the machine to run steadily and comparatively quiet.

British Columbia.

T. E. Peck, East Wellington hotel, is dead. McKinnell & Cole have opened a wholesale liquor establishment at Nanaimo.

William Kirkup, hardware dealer, of Revelstoke, will open a branch at Nelson.

James Wilcox, of the firm of Sabiston & Wilcox, Commercial hotel, Nanaimo, is dead.

McDonald & Hobbs have commenced business as wholesale wine and liquor merchants, at Nanaimo.

The members of the Vancouver Early Cosing Association have decided to abandon the Wednesday half-holiday, on account of the opposition of some merchants.

Jas. McDonald & Co., of Revelstoke, have secured the contract for building the stations, storehouses, sheds, etc., for the Columbia and Kootenay railway at Sproat and Nelson.

The first shipment of this season's sealskins for the London market has been made from Victoria by M. J. Davis representing Joseph Ullman. He sent a full carload via the C.P.R. and New York.

A change has occurred in the personnel of the legal firm of Corbould, McColl, Forin & Campbell, of Vancouver and New Westminster, Forin and Morrison retire from the firm and Charles Wilson of Victoria, becomes a member of it.

Nelson Miner: As a result of the transfer of the Wheeler interests in Hot Springs district to W. L. Hoge of Anaconda, Montana, sampling and concentrating works will shortly be erected at some point in the district—probably at Ainsworth.

The electors of Richmond municipality have voted on the by-law for raising \$40,000 for improving and making roads. The result of the poll was that the by-law was carried by the

majority of 43. Out of 119 votes, 81 were for the by-law, and 38 against.

The *Vernon News and Okanagan Farm and Live Stock Journal* is the latest addition to the newspaper list of British Columbia. It is an eight-page paper, and is got up very creditably. The *News* is to be run on independent principles, with the Okanagan country as its special charge. We wish the new arrival every success.

The *Victoria Times* says: “A dreadful disaster occurred on the sealing schooner *Juanita* three days ago, while the vessel was sealing off Vancouver Island shore. One of the crew was engaged in loading cartridge shells in the cabin, when one of them went off and ignited a cask of powder. In the explosion that followed the captain was seriously injured. Seven of the crew, all but one aboard, were badly hurt, and all were blinded by the explosion. The schooner entered port to-day in charge of two men from another schooner, with her injured crew lying in the hold. The cabin was completely destroyed. The quantity of powder exploded was over 25 pounds.”

Vancouver News: The Vancouver Shipbuilding, Sealing and Trading Company has launched, from their shipyard on False Creek, Vancouver, the first of their sealing schooners which is as staunch a ship of 96 tons, as any that has been sent north to Behring Sea. The company has pushed forward to completion this vessel under trying circumstances, as skilled labor for this class of work has been nearly impossible to obtain.

Nelson Miner: At Ainsworth Dr. Henry of Spokane, is building a drug store; Roderick McLeod, a 25x100 foot addition to his hotel; Olson & Williamsons a 30x60 2 story hotel; Wilson & Pordue, a 20x30 1½-story meat market; and the Spokane Mercantile Company are making preparations to build a store. At Nelson work is being carried on on the International hotel, R. E. Lemon's hardware store, the Clark & Malone building, the Nelson hotel, the Tolson building, G. O. Buchanan's 2 residences, the Huston & Ink block, and on several small additions to stores and hotels. About 60 mechanics are employed in all in the two towns.

Columbian: Last fall, while digging a ditch at Steveston, a small vein of natural gas was struck, but at the time nothing was thought of it. It was noticed, however, a short time ago that the stream of gas was increasing, and last night W. H. Stevers determined to see what sort of a blaze it would make. He placed a barrel over the stream, and allowing only a small hole for the gas to escape, set fire to it, with the result that a flame four feet high shot into the air, burning Mr. Stevers' rather seriously before he could withdraw them. The flame gradually subsided to about ten inches in height, which burned all night, and was still burning when Mr. Stevers left home yesterday morning. When the news spread that a vein of natural gas had been discovered, there was considerable excitement at Steveston, and people gathered from all parts of the neighborhood to see the blaze. It is understood that Mr. Steves and a number of other gentlemen will form a company and take immediate steps to develop the vein, which they are confident will result in a big strike of natural gas. It is to be hoped their expectations will be realized.