

the Survey should completely develop their particular mining areas and open up their properties at the government expense. The absurdity of this method or the fallacy of their logic never appears to be considered by these individuals, since two very important obstacles would be presented at the very outset, the first of which would probably be the protest made by every mining engineer against the encroachment on the part of the government, through its staff, upon the rights of the private individual and the consequent interference with his profession; and secondly, the fact that very few treasuries could be found which would stand the enormous drain put upon their resources if the government should attempt the development of every mining location, real or fancied, and at the instance of every proprietor or company, while the staff necessary to undertake so extensive a system of work would speedily assume such enormous dimensions as to be beyond control. There are, however, certain cases where the advice of the government geological expert may be sought, and that with propriety, although it frequently happens that when such advice has been asked and obtained, the person giving it receives very little credit for ability either as a mining expert or geologist. Very often this by no means flattering result arises from the fact that some mining quack has already visited the spot, and in the hope or expectation of finding a job, more or less permanent, in the development of the property, has, by means of a judicious employment of certain technical terms, concerning the meaning of which he is very often ignorant, done his best to persuade the owner that great stores of mineral wealth lie just beneath the surface, waiting only for the application of the skill which he may possess for their successful extraction. How often this story has been told concerning certain areas, when upon a careful examination not the slightest indication of mineral wealth has been revealed, but such is the credulity and the peculiar bias of the human mind that the opinion most in accord with its own desires, is accepted, no matter how great its improbability.

It would appear desirable, also, that government advice should be given when requested in cases where large interests are involved, which are of more than a merely private importance; as, for instance, where the mineral resources of an entire district are in question, as in the case