

MINING.

OUR MINING LAW.—While our present Mining Act has many commendable features, THE CRITIC has had occasion, in several instances, to point out defects and suggest remedies. In some cases, the law has been loosely carried out, in others, the Act itself requires amendments, and with the sole desire of seeing mining placed in a permanent impregnable position, we have considered it our duty to place debatable matter before our readers for discussion and thorough ventilation, so that only the best remedy may be adopted. Understanding the dangers of hasty and ill-advised legislation, we have advocated the formation of a Mining Association, where, amongst other subjects, the Mining Act could be discussed, errors proved, and remedies suggested. Taking the light thrown on the Act by recent decisions the experience of practical men as to its working, and comparing it with the mining laws of other countries, a properly constituted committee of the Legislature, aided by the best legal talent, should be able to draft an Act that would remedy existing defects without infringing on acquired rights. The Act in amendment of the present Act, introduced by Mr. Fraser, M.P., aimed in this direction, but had been so hastily drawn out that it would have produced more harm than good, and on that ground we had to oppose it. We have made no general or unnecessary attack on the Act, but have always pointed out abuses that were doing incalculable damage to our gold mines, and have also always suggested means of obviating them. Large tracts in the best mining camps in the Province are now held by speculators, who will not work them, and hold them at such exorbitant prices that capital is driven from the country. Some remedy should be provided for this evil. The litigation in connection with the Salmon River mine, and other less important properties, had caused our mining titles to be looked on with distrust in the States, and had given rise to the celebrated telegram, "we buy mines, not law suits." These suits brought to light some defects in the Mining Act, and THE CRITIC, in the sole endeavor to have them remedied, felt compelled to make them public. A stringent law to punish bogus claimants to mines; a better protection for prospectors and discoverers of new districts, a change in the Act to prevent speculators in Halifax from taking up large tracts in new districts, of which they know nothing, and which they had no intention of working,—these and a few other points have from time to time been taken up by THE CRITIC; and there is not a candid mining man in the Provinces but will admit that they are all subjects demanding remedial legislation. One very knotty point under the Mining Act is likely to be brought to light at any moment, and it would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer to decide it correctly. It arises through the discovery of copper and lead ores containing more or less gold or silver. Lead and copper are taken up under a five mile right of search. Gold and silver under leases covering a certain number of mining areas. During the Thompson-Holmes Government discoverers of galena ores containing gold and silver were obliged to cover their properties with gold leases, which are an expensive item when a large tract has to be covered; and as a farther protection, had also to take out a license to search over 5 square miles for lead. Afterwards, the Mining Act was amended in 1884, and section 101 now provides that "All leases of copper and lead mines which have been or may be issued under this Chapter or any Act passed by the Legislature of this Province, shall be held and construed to convey to the lessee or lessees therein named, and his or their assigns, all ores and metals held in composition, associated with or contained in the copper or lead ores therein conveyed, and the same shall be subject to the same royalties as are hereinafter provided for such ores and metals."

We will give one example to show how this provision acts in actual practice. A has taken out a 5 mile right of search for lead, which, under the above section, gives him the right to all the gold and silver associated with the lead. B has since secured a gold lease for 12 areas, covering some of the ground included in A's right of search. Through the conflict that arises under the Act by which gold and silver are taken up in one way, and other minerals in another, the Mines Department have given two different men the right to mine the same piece of ground. Unless action is at once taken by the Department, should the property prove rich, there is here the nucleus of a heavy law suit. In this case, we think that the Department has been led into error by the complicated nature of the Mining Act. The books in which licenses and leases to search for minerals other than gold and silver, are entered up, and are kept separate from those in which gold leases are recorded. There are also separate plans for each class of leases. Mr. Kelly used formerly to attend to the first leases, Mr. Carman or his clerks to the latter. Through this division of duties, the mistake has occurred, and the property has been covered in both ways. In this case, the Department should certainly recall the lease to B, and exercise due care in the future that gold leases are not granted on properties covered by a five mile right of search. A careful revision of the Act would simplify questions of this kind, and remove the friction between different classes of leases. A majority of the mining men of the Province have signified their desire to join the Mining Association, and it is time that they now organize for business. They should be able to meet the next Legislature with a carefully amended Act, and there is no doubt but that the Department of Mines will assist them by all means in its power.

Principal Fraser read a most interesting and instructive paper on the Iron Ores of Acadia Mines, before the Acadia Mines Scientific and Literary Club. He referred to the fact that native iron had never been found at Acadia Mines, but that it was in chemical combination with other elements. That to separate the iron from these elements had caused the expenditure of millions of dollars, and gave rise to the chief industry of the town. He then touched on the geological formation in which the iron was found, and

described the different kinds of ore obtained in the Acadia Mines. His paper was a very able one, and imparted instruction that must have been invaluable to his hearers.

The "Marble Mountain of Cape Breton" is the title of a pamphlet which fully describes the wonderful deposit of marble situated on the north side of the West Bay of the Bras d'Or Lake. From it we gather that the best solid pure white and variegated marbles are in a mass, covering about 300 acres. Other varieties of the purest marble abound in all directions, and sufficient work has been done to prove an almost unlimited supply of the best and most marketable marble. Scientific and practical men from all parts of the civilized world furnish testimonials and certificates of the purity of the deposit and its superior working qualities. The adverse tariff in the United States has greatly retarded the development of the quarry but the superiority of the marble will some day bring it into demand.

GOLD RIVER DISTRICT.—*Editor of Critic.*—DEAR SIR,—Knowing the interest you take in mining matters, I take the liberty of penning a few lines for publication in your paper, if you see fit to insert them. Perhaps no mining district to the westward has been prospected so thoroughly as Gold River (especially the latter part of this summer) and with better success. C. H. Mill has prospected the J. E. Gammon property, and has met with unparalleled success, having found five lodes in close proximity to each other, varying in width from five feet to thirteen, some showing gold on the surface. A good lode has been discovered on the fifty-four area block owned by Messrs. Heisler, Hyde, and others. This lode was opened last week in two places, and some good specimens taken out of each shaft. The lode is two feet wide, composed of heavily laminated quartz, with a belt of decomposed slate, rust, etc., running with it, which is all good crushing material. Prospecting is being carried on searching for another lode north of this one, from which good drift has been found.

The want of a good crusher has been the great drawback of this camp, quartz to be tested having to be sent a long distance, which makes it very unsatisfactory and expensive to those wanting a test. Mr. G. J. Heisler is prospecting his property west of the Gammon areas, and hopes to open one or more good lodes shortly.

P. S.—Since writing the above, word has been received, which can be relied on, that a lode five feet wide has been opened on Mr. G. J. Heisler's property, showing good specimens of gold.

I remain, yours etc.,

Chester Basin.

MINER.

TANGIER DISTRICT.—In Tangier proper, the only work now doing is some tribute work at the western end, and the work of the Brunswick Co. at the eastern end, where a shaft is being sunk on the Forrest lead, to cut the continuation westward of the rich ore in the old workings, and with fair prospect of success. At Mooseland, which is part of the Tangier district, about 12 miles distant, there is some tribute work being done on the old Humbert property, and some prospecting on the new ground across the river. Mr. Dissoway, in connection with gentlemen from the Western States, is driving a tunnel on their property, but has not reached bedrock. On the property to the north, owned by Mr. Dissoway, Mr. Townsend, and others, one lead showing gold has been found, but as it has only been cut in a narrow trench, but little can be said about it. They have also indications of other gold bearing leads, which are not far distant. To the eastward, Mr. Willis has cut one lead on his property, and proposes to run a cut of five hundred feet in length across his areas. There is a fair prospect of some very good developments being made in that locality before spring.

OLDHAM DISTRICT.—Mr. E. C. McDonnell brought into town a brick of 140 ozs. of gold, the product of 65 tons of quartz, being the result of six weeks' work by 20 men. The ore was taken from the Dumbuck lead, which averages about six inches in thickness, and was mined from a tunnel at a depth of 250 feet. The main shaft has reached a depth of 315 feet, the quality of the ore steadily improving as the lead is sunk upon. Mr. McDonnell has been mining for over 23 years, 14 of them on his own account, and has probably paid as much money in Royalties as any mine in the Province. The mine is equipped with one of Mumford's patent boilers and a good hoisting engine, and has proved a most profitable investment to its owner.

Mineral Products of the United States.—From Official Reports.

	1884.		1885.	
Products.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
METALLIC.				
Pig-iron, smt. value.....long tons..	\$ 4,057,869	\$73,761,624	\$ 4,044,525	\$64,712,411
Silver, coining value troy ounces	37,744,605	48,800,000	39,910,270	51,600,000
Gold, coining value.....do.....	1,489,949	30,890,000	1,538,376	31,801,000
Copper, value at N. York City...pds.	147,805,407	18,106,162	170,902,607	18,222,000
Lead, value at N. Y. City, short tons.	139,897	10,537,042	129,412	10,462,000
Zinc value at New York City do	38,544	3,422,707	40,688	3,529,000
Quicksilver, vlc. at San Francisco, flasks	31,913	936,327	32,073	979,000
Nickel, value at Philadelphia...pds..	64,550	48,412	277,904	191,000
Antimony, value at San Francisco, short tons.....
Platinum, value (crude) at New York City, troy ounces.....	150	450	250	15
Aluminum, value at Philadelphia, troy ounces.....	1,800	1,350	3,400	23
Total value metallic products....		\$186,414,674		\$181,582,000
Total value non-metallic mineral products.....		226,800,674		\$246,931,000
Grand Total.....		\$413,214,748		\$428,513,000
		—Engineering and Mining Journal		

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