

MINING.

Mineral samples sent to the Critic office, accompanied by a fee of one dollar, will be submitted to a thoroughly competent assayer for a preliminary examination and slight test of contents. The results will be communicated to senders of samples, and if full assays are deemed advisable, they will be notified and instructed as to amount of fees to be remitted.

MONTAGU—THE UNDERGROUND WORKINGS OF THE SYMON-KAYE MINE—GROUND BROKEN FOR A TEN STAMP MILL.

We had accepted an invitation from Messrs. Boyd and Clancy to attend the entertainment at Montagu in honor of Mr. Woodhouse on Tuesday week last—not Wednesday as we unaccountably wrote in the last issue of *THE CRITIC*—but the heavy snow storm Monday night, which continued with little intermission all Tuesday morning, put the idea of getting to Montagu out of our head, as we considered the roads impassible. Tuesday afternoon, however, Mr. Boyd dropped in on his way to Montagu, and we accompanied him to the ferry, where Mr. Woodhouse was waiting, and together we took the boat to Dartmouth.

Here we spent a pleasant half hour at Green's while a pair of his powerful and spirited grays were being harnessed to a roomy and very comfortable sleigh. When the team finally drove up we ensconced ourselves beneath the warm robes, the driver grasped the reins and off we went ploughing through the deep but fairly level snow. It was heavy work for the horses, but they kept up an easy trot and we were soon skirting the lakes and passing through the stretches of woodland which lend so much beauty to the scenery on the Waverley road.

The sun came out, and at one turn of the road hemmed in on either side by spruces and firs, we stopped the team to enjoy the perfect winter scene. The trees were loaded down with the whitest of snow, while an unbroken level of the same emblem of purity spread everywhere, the whole glistening in the bright sun. It was simply a delight to breathe the pure fresh air, while ones feelings were soothed by the peace and quietness that pervaded all nature.

Continuing our journey we arrived at Mr. Boyd's quarters on the Symon-Kaye Mine at about six p. m. Mr. Boyd's man soon prepared us a cup of chocolate, and at 7.30 we walked over to Barker's and had a substantial dinner. At Barker's there was quite a company of youths and maidens, and the exciting topic was the coming entertainment, in providing the good things for which Mrs. Barker had been busily cooking most of the day.

Mr. Woodhouse was on a visit of inspection, and the numerous details of the prospective work and the interviews with various employees took up all his time, the one absorbing topic being the mine.

After dinner we returned to Mr. Boyd's quarters, where Messrs. Woodhouse and Boyd dressed, and then we took a sleigh to Cooper's, where we thoroughly enjoyed the dance and supper, the particulars of which have already appeared in *THE CRITIC*. Towards the close of the evening we adjourned to Mr. Cooper's parlor, where Mr. Boyd performed a number of brilliant solos on the piano, and also sang several comic and sentimental songs in his well-known inimitable manner. Mr. Woodhouse also sang a very amusing serio comic ditty which was warmly applauded. In the company assembled in the Coopers' Parlor were the two charming daughters of the host, and Mr. J. C. McQuarrie and his bright vivacious wife. Mr. McQuarrie is the amalgamator of the Nova Scotia Gold Mines, limited, and has contributed many valuable articles to *THE CRITIC* on the Montagu district, with every foot of which he is familiar.

It was late or early when the party broke up, and we were assigned quarters at Mrs. Logan's. Here in a large upper room containing three beds, two of which were occupied by tired miners, we rapidly undressed and were soon joining our spouses in grand chorus with the other sleepers.

Mrs. Logan is the widow of Alfred Logan, the miner accidentally killed in the Annand Mine last autumn, and was left the sole support of three little ones, the youngest being hardly seven months old. No one but she can appreciate the terrible loss she has sustained in the death of her husband and bread winner, but wasting no time in useless repining, she has set herself to maintain herself and little ones, and now provides for their evident comfort by taking in boarders. At breakfast in the morning we met Mrs. Logan, who is a woman of unusual ability and energy. Her little ones, all bright, pretty children were playing around, and our hearts were touched as we thought of their bereavement. It brought before us most vividly the dangers of a miner's life. In a series of entertainments Messrs. Woodhouse and Boyd raised quite a substantial sum for the widow, and she never tires in expressing her appreciation of their kindness.

We were to visit the underground workings of the mine and soon after breakfast repaired to Mr. Boyd's headquarters. Mr. Woodhouse loaned us a pair of miner's boots, and protected by a waterproof we were ready to make our trip underground.

We first had a look at the power-house buildings and machinery on the surface, all of which have lately been described in *THE CRITIC*, and then went down the temporary shaft on the Skerry Lead. This is now being utilized (while the pumping and sinking is going on in the main shaft) to raise the ore. It is some forty-seven feet to the bottom in one straight descent by ladders and, has been connected by a drift at the bottom along the lead with the main shaft some twenty-seven feet west. Work has been done both ways, east and west, and some very rich ore obtained, about sixty tons of which are now on the surface. Walking through the drift to the main shaft the water in places was six or eight inches deep, and as we paused while Mr. Woodhouse gave his instructions regarding future work the water came down the sides of the shaft in a shower bath pour and found its way in a freezing streak down the back of our neck. Here the nine

inch pump was at work sucking up great quantities of water and raising it to the surface to be discharged in sluices across the swamp. When this pump (which is perfect in its action) is being lowered the water is kept down by an auxiliary pump of smaller, not similar, size.

We will not go into all the details of our inspection, but state here that the mining work is being thoroughly and rapidly done—that some rich nuggets have been already secured, and that another was just ready to be dislodged at the time of our visit, and that the main shaft is to be perpendicularly sunk, this work to go on continuously for five hundred feet or more. At each station levels will be driven and all the mining carried on by over-hand stoping. Mr. Rankine is the foreman of the underground work, and is, from all accounts, a most capable man. We ascended the main shaft (a three compartment one as previously described) and arrived at the surface very much in the condition of drowned rats.

Mr. Woodhouse then laid out the site of the new stamp mill on the hill near the flag staff, and work was at once ordered to be begun in excavating for the battery foundations and in putting up the crusher building. A ten stamp mill has been purchased—the mill at Margaret's Bay—and will be at once dismantled and hauled to Montagu. No time will be lost, and it is expected that the mill will be dropping its stamps on the Symon-Kaye property by April 15th next. The site chosen will admit of extending the mill as the necessity arises, and the present building will be sufficiently large to accommodate fifteen stamps. Steam power will be used at first, but eventually the mining and milling will all be done by water power.

The boiler at the power house is now run most economically—a cord of wood and a barrel of coal being the fuel consumed in twenty-four hours, the total expense of fuel and attendance being less than three dollars daily.

Mr. Woodhouse, Mr. Boyd, and Mr. Rankine then spent an hour at headquarters, where Mr. Woodhouse completed his instructions for the carrying out of the work.

In the interim we strolled around and met Capt. Maynard, of the Salisbury Company, and was informed by him that the Nissen mill, just completed and turned over to the company, was giving entire satisfaction.

We dined at Barker's, but did not start on our return to Dartmouth until late in the afternoon, catching the five o'clock boat for Halifax, after a stop at Green's.

The whole trip was enjoyable and instructive, and we are convinced that Mr. Woodhouse is going to make a great success of the Symon-Kaye Mine.

THE WHITNEY SYNDICATE.

In reading the objections raised in the press to the Whitney coal bill, only amazement can result, as in all cases ignorance and bigotry are plainly shown.

The Ontario press, in its new born zeal for the interests of Nova Scotia, proves in its utterances in discussing the bill that it does not understand the question, or that it has been misled by the *Herald* and other journals in this Province, which have without rhyme or reason united in libelling the undertaking.

One objection raised is that the Whitney lease contains no provision compelling the working of the areas under penalty of forfeiture. The *Herald*, in giving the history of mining legislation in this Province, has withheld the fact that the mining act has been amended and a rental system introduced doing away with the provisions of the former acts where the penalty exacted was forfeiture for non working. The act introducing the rental system has been assented to by the Crown, and is now binding. When this change was before the assembly it was fully discussed, and it was so obviously to the benefit of both the Province and lessees, that it received the assent of all parties, Mr. Cahan, then, as now, being the leader of the opposition. Years of experience had proved that the forfeiture-for-non-working provision of the act did not meet the requirements of the case. It was found that jumpers and blackmailers were the only ones that profited by the provision, and that the title given was so insecure that capitalists hesitated to invest. Hence the rental system was substituted, giving a larger revenue to the Province, and forcing holders of areas to pay a certain amount, as large as it was possible to exact, if they failed to work their properties.

Under the existing acts, therefore, the Whitney Syndicate could have purchased the Cape Breton mines, and, if they failed to work them, would have only been compelled to pay thirty dollars yearly in rental on each square mile.

If they had purchased the Cape Breton mines simply to shut them down, they would not have asked for special legislation, nor have agreed to pay a minimum royalty of \$125,000 annually.

These are the simple facts, and they prove that there is nothing in the contention that the lease to the syndicate should have made provision for forfeiture in case of non working, and also that the Government has not disregarded the wishes of the Crown, as the rental act has been duly sanctioned.

Another objection is the monopoly cry, and it is proclaimed that the Whitneys and their associates are going to form a large combine with the Pennsylvania Coal Barons, and force up the price of coal to consumers.

The *Philadelphia Record* ought to know something about coal combines, and in a brief editorial, it proves that a combination of the bituminous coal interests is simply an impossibility, and has never been entertained. It shows that the attempt of the anthracite mine owners to combine, although the area is limited, had proved a failure, and asks how it is possible to form a combine of the bituminous mines, covering as they do thousands of miles, and distributed in most sections of the country.

Nothing but malice can lead the opponents of the Whitney syndicate to raise the monopoly cry, and to publish as arguments against it extracts from New York and Boston papers written in opposition to the anthracite combine.