

a fine large mortgage on his property, which probably he may never be able to lift. One need not go far from the province of Ontario for illustrations of this peculiar tendency on the part of certain persons to invest money in this reckless manner. Thus when we find men, otherwise shrewd enough in ordinary business matters throwing away thousands of dollars in an attempt to obtain oil by boring through the Laurentian granites and gneisses as has been done in the upper Rideau district not very long ago, even by people who should have known better, there is evidently a necessity for further enlightenment on these subjects, in order that the public may be better guided. Recently, I met a person who was endeavouring to obtain coal by sinking a shaft through the crystalline limestone in Lanark county, and in reply to my observations that he would not find it there, he stated that he knew he did not agree with the scientists on the subject, but he was convinced the coal was there, because he had smelled the gas in the shaft. His case was a hard one and difficult to deal with, for the reason that he would not be convinced on the ground of common sense and scientific knowledge; and his chances for success were scarcely equal to those of a man I once met in New Brunswick, who had a large farm composed principally of barren grey sandstone, but who knew that there was a large body of iron ore on his place because lightning had struck there twice in fifteen years.

It is wonderful how some men get carried away on the subject of mines. I have known men of the highest standing in the legal world who were prepared to spend thousands of dollars in mining on the word of a travelling clairvoyant, whom they had consulted on the subject, and who, after going into a trance, declared he clearly saw a large body of rich ore three hundred feet below the surface. On the mere strength of such a statement a company went to work and sunk a shaft 500 feet, in which they dropped 50,000 dollars of capital, without finding the rich ore body so easily located. People in general will scarcely believe such instances of folly exist among those whom education should cause to know better, but at the same time