

In discussing actual rescue work, it is recommended that a rescue party should consist of at least five or six members. In no circumstances should the men, while working in unbreathable gases, separate. Every member of the party should be within easy reach of the others. Relief parties should be stationed at the nearest point in good air, in readiness to start at a moment's notice. Every large mine should have four crews, each of six men, including a captain and a lieutenant. Weekly practices are imperatively necessary.

The Federal Bureau of Mines has organized and established a course of training for miners. At various stations gas-tight rooms, containing imitation mine entries, and overcasts, have been erected. The air is fouled in various ways, such, for instance, as burning straw, damp hay, animal refuse; or by spraying ammonia, or by burning formaldehyde.

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The efforts of the United States Bureau of Mines should be followed keenly by Canadian coal-mine operators. It is to be hoped that our own Federal Mines Branch will profit by the example set. The Pittsburg demonstration should be attended by many Canadian representatives.

THE PENNIAC REEF GOLD MINES.

A pained subscriber has sent us a marked copy of The Star Lake Mining News, along with a prayer that we do what we can "to stop this sort of thing."

It may be explained that The Star Lake Mining News is one of those journalistic ephemera that live but for a day. It is published in Winnipeg. Its sole object in life is to induce its readers to buy shares in the Penniac Reef Gold Mines, whose mining claims lie in the district of Star Lake, Manitoba, "only 85 miles east of Winnipeg."

So weary are we of "this sort of thing" that only by the exercise of a very stern sense of editorial duty were we able to read through the sheet. Duty performed brought its own reward. A sentence on the first page caused us to prick up our ears. It ran thus: "The first step of the owners was to interest capital, and to this end one of Canada's most prominent mining engineers was invited to inspect the property, and give a valuation of the mining claims." The "most prominent engineer" came and saw and was conquered. We are informed by The Star Lake Mining News that he offered \$100,000 for the claims out of hand. This offer was incontinently refused — largely because the owners hankered to give the public a chance. The "engineer," therefore, made a report and received "his usual fee."

That report, if we may judge by quotations, must have been a jewel. It is asserted that the ore in sight (this term should have no vulgar definition) amounts to 3,000,000 tons, of an estimated value run-

ning up to \$34,200,000. The engineering feats that have put this ore "in sight" consist in one 5-foot shaft, two cross-trenches, each 200 feet in extent, and four 20-foot pits. Thirty-five (God save us!) assays have been made. The average, and one can imagine that average, gold content is \$11.33 per ton!

Why pursue the subject further? We marvelled at the expedition with which that ore, three million solid tons, was visualized—"in sight" is to prosaic a phrase. What wizard had waved his wand? What conjurer has cozened cold Mother Earth?

The first line on page 2 illumed us. There we discerned and recognized with great joy the name of George R. Thurber, a name honoured (for a time at least) in other parts of Ontario! Now did we know the inwardness of things!

That our readers may join with us in admiring Mr. Thurber, in hailing him as Canada's greatest professional achievement, we need only quote from an editorial that was printed, published, and distributed by the CANADIAN MINING JOURNAL on October 15, 1909. The caption of that editorial is "Fairy Gold." The text runs thuswise:

"A certain son of Belial is loose in the Lake of the Woods. Here, at Kenora, he has built him a plant wherein, by occult means, he renders from the ore gold not extractable by fire-assay nor by any other device known to man.

"Indeed, if you wish to get some idea of what this gentleman at Kenora can do to a gold ore, all that is necessary is to multiply by three or four the results obtained by an ordinary or garden variety of assayer. And so convincing is the manner of this Kenora person, that several mature persons have not abstained from chipping in with him.

"We are not unfamiliar with the kind of process that is being exploited at Kenora. There are many such varieties, based upon the alleged existence of 'queen' gold, 'latent gold,' etc., etc., and etc. But the real object of search in all these processes is another allotropic form of the metal named 'fool's' gold."

Our opinion of Mr. Thurber is evident. Evident, also, is the fact that he is, consciously or unconsciously, the High Priest of the Order of Fakirs. This is an honorary degree attained only by years of hard labour — and usually followed by a longer term of the same.

THE EIGHT HOURS ACT IN OPERATION.

In the annual report of the Inspector of Mines for the Yorkshire and North Midland District, Great Britain, the working effect of the Eight Hours Act is fully discussed. The Act has been in operation for a year. During that time enough has been learned to discredit many prophecies.