

MINING.

THE CRITIC'S ASSAY DEPARTMENT.—THE CRITIC has on several occasions called attention to the necessity of the Government appointing a Provincial Assayer. The expense connected with sending samples for assay to the States, deters many finders of minerals from having them tested, and sections of the Province containing valuable deposits of mineral thus remain comparatively unknown. Besides, there are risks of the samples falling into the hands of dishonest analysts, who throw them to one side, and drawing on their vivid imagination, write out an analysis, favorable or unfavorable, as it suits their mood. It is an easy way to make a fee of from ten to fifteen dollars, and the hardened conscience of the analyst is not troubled by the fact that his report may cause the abandonment of a valuable mineral deposit, or the expenditure of a large sum of money to develop a really worthless property. Feeling that the need of an analyst is a crying one, which should be at once supplied, THE CRITIC has made arrangements with a thoroughly competent and reliable mineralogist, who will give an honest analysis of all samples handed him. Farmers, farm hands, and sportsmen, who are ignorant of all knowledge of mineralogy, often find specimens of minerals which they would like tested, simply to know the quality of the mineral contained in the ore; and in cases of this kind, (where results can be expeditiously arrived at), the analyst will charge a fee of only two dollars. In more difficult cases a higher fee will of course have to be charged, and where there is a combination of metals, and different processes have to be gone through with to determine the several mineral constituents, an additional fee will have to be paid for each process. The price of analyses will therefore vary from two to eight dollars, according to the actual labor and expense incurred by the operator in making the analysis. Instances have been known where assayers have tested really valuable minerals and reported them worthless, and then (profiting by the depression caused by their false analysis) have sent out their agents and bought up the properties for little or nothing. Recognizing this fact, and also understanding the importance of the strictest secrecy, THE CRITIC is happy to inform its readers that the high character of the gentleman to whom it will submit samples for analysis, is a sufficient guarantee that careful, painstaking analyses will be made of all ores sent, and that the results will only be known to the analyst and the sender of the sample.

We have had considerable difficulty in prevailing on our friend to undertake the work, as he feared that it would not prove sufficiently remunerative to pay for the outfit required, but now that he has consented, and is prepared to attend accurately and promptly to all assay business, we trust that he will be liberally patronized.

Patrons having samples of ore for analysis should send them to "Analyst, care of A. M. Fraser, Business Manager of THE CRITIC," and should also remit a fee of two dollars. If more should be required they will be duly notified.

BONDING MINES.—Giving bonds of mines for periods of from three to six months, is a system much in vogue in this Province; and when the bonddees are capitalists, and have entered into the contract honestly, it certainly is one of the fairest ways of disposing of a mine. It gives the bonddees an opportunity of testing the value of the mine, and if it proves worthless, they escape from the speculation with the loss of only the cash actually spent in proving the property. Still, the system has been much abused, and as in all cases where dishonesty has been practiced, the mine owners have been the sufferers; great care should be taken before bonding a mine. Speculators with hardly enough capital to pay their hotel bills, but claiming to represent capitalists in the States or in Europe, frequently pay us a visit and bond properties right and left. We have known cases where these bonddees have prevailed on the mine owner to advance them the money to develop the property or pay their passages to the land of the capitalist, and in all these cases the mine owner has been left in the lurch. In other cases, they secure a bond of the mine at a reasonable price, and then try to dispose of it at such a high figure that they defeat their own purpose, and at the end of three or six months the mine owner regains possession of his property, only to find that it has been permanently injured by the bonddees, and that the season is too far advanced to do anything with it that year. Instances have been known where dishonest bonddees have discovered the great value of the property, and have then set systematically to work to depreciate the mine. Work is stopped, the shafts are allowed to cave in, and the bond is forfeited. The mine owner is disheartened, it may be in debt, and in the end these tactics result in his disposing of the property at a tithe of its value. Ultimately, he discovers that the purchaser was a tool in the hands of the original bonddees, and that he has been swindled out of a valuable mine. Again, parties having properties of their own to dispose of have been known to bond similar mines, simply to keep them out of the market until their own had been sold.

The poor mine owner, in his anxiety to obtain the necessary capital to develop his mine, is led into all kinds of traps by oily-tongued speculators, and the "freezing out" process is too often applied with success. Bonds may be drawn in the most careful manner, imposing the severest pecuniary penalties for non-compliance with their terms, but where the bonddees are penurious, they are not worth the paper they are written on.

But where due care is exercised, and the bonddees is a man of well known financial ability, and of high character, a bond allowing the purchaser to prove the property is fair to all parties concerned. The Lake Lode mine, of the Caribou district, which was reported upon in the last issue of THE CRITIC, is an instance in point. Here the bonddees had one of their number at the mine during the three months that the bond was in existence, and also had reports made by reliable experts. The result was, that the mine was purchased for the price agreed upon, \$30,000. In this case, both pur-

chasers and sellers are satisfied; and the latter will find enhanced enjoyment of their well-earned money in the knowledge that they have given full value in return.

Where properties are undeveloped, no matter how fine the prospect may be, purchasers should in all instances insist on a bond, allowing them sufficient time to prove the value of the mine. A mine owner who is afraid to have money expended in opening up his property, should be left severely alone. He is right on refusing a bond when he is uncertain of the standing of the parties; but where this is not questioned, and abundant security is deposited, his refusal to give a bond should be considered convincing evidence that his mine is worthless.

MOOSE RIVER.—Andrew McGregor and others are working the Montreal property, and are meeting with fair success. The best work in the district is being done by Mr. Touquoy on his valuable property, and indications point to the fact that Moose River is destined to become one of the greatest gold mining centres in the Province.

GOLD MINING.—Rumor says that active operations in this line are being carried on almost within the town plot of Shelburne. The present owners, it is said, in their political enthusiasm, have conferred upon it the name of the prospective independent candidate, Gen. Laurie. The discovery has been made to the westward of the falls bridge, near the residence of Mr. George Durfee, and under the superintendence of a well-known stone mason, granite boulders are being removed, but little gold found.—*Cape Sable Advertiser.*

This is certainly wonderful, if true, as granite boulders are not generally considered the best indications of the precious metal.

MINING MATTERS IN NEW BRUNSWICK.—Since writing you last, matters in mining have been very quiet. The Mineral Vale property at New Ireland, Albert County, is working away steadily. The new engine and boiler placed in the mine give them every satisfaction, and crushing and smelting go on regularly. Have not heard of matte shipped to Swansea for test yet. If I do, will let you know later. The owners of the property feel very much encouraged.

The manganese mines at Markhamville are being worked steadily, and constant shipments of the ore to the United States and Great Britain are being made.

The Mayflower mine in the vicinity of new line road continues to show good deposit, and probabilities are that a sale of this property, or a portion of it, is not far distant.

Parties in Truro, N. S., are prospecting for manganese in the vicinity of Peticodiac, under the direction of one generally known as Miner Brown. It is said fair showing is being made, but as yet no bonanza.

Your correspondent was shown to-day a sample of manganese, and also a sample of galena, from Bay Shore, so called. The manganese, although only surface samples, shows evidence of being a good article, while the galena is certainly a magnificent specimen. The party who has both properties bonded, says there is large showing of both, and is prepared to enter into negotiations with persons wishing to invest in such properties. Failing this, he will endeavor to open the manganese mine himself shortly. Information concerning these properties can be had by applying to THE CRITIC office for proper address, etc.

A copper mine (sulphuret of copper) in the LeTete district, in Charlotte County, N. B., has recently been bonded, with fair prospects of sale being effected.

NATURAL GAS.—Long as man has been on this planet, he as yet is not aware of all that is on the earth, much less under it. Petroleum wells have a great antiquity; but it is only of late years that mineral oils have been found literally in hundreds of places. In boring for oil, natural gas has been discovered. A few years ago it was considered a marvel, but to-day there are numerous holes in the earth through which gas flows in a never-ceasing stream; nor is it to be found alone in the region southeast of Lake Erie. It has been discovered at so many different points, that it is now beginning to be suspected that wherever coal is found oil and gas are not far off. Natural gas effected a revolution in the iron trade of Western Pennsylvania. Makers of steel now dispense with coal and save large sums by using gas, not only as an illuminant, but also as a fuel. There is reason to believe that our large cities will eventually be supplied with natural gas brought in pipes from the regions where found, and which will be sold for half the price of coal gas.—*Demorest's Monthly.*

As both oil and gas should be found in close proximity to coal, it seems strange that our large coal companies have done nothing to test their properties. Sporadic attempts have been made to bore for oil in Cape Breton and Pictou County, but want of capital has prevented systematic work. Where success is so certain of a rich reward, capital to sink oil or gas wells should be easily obtainable.

NOVA SCOTIA STONE.—Samples of precious stone are shown from Nova Scotia. They are of the hardness of the amethyst family, and can be obtained in fairly large quantities, in crystals or in solid massive deposits, of all colors from a very light to a very dark purplish and from a clear crystal to a very dark, smoky quartz. Several pieces have been cut for jewelry, and are very pretty. It could be used in large pieces for the ornamentation of the interior of public or private buildings such as hall ornamentations, mantels, floors, and numerous other purposes.—*Chicago Mining Review.*

The editor also states that some fine specimens of the stone have been presented to the Mining Review cabinet by Mr. Adam McKay.