

## MINING.—Continued.

all concerned is (I speak now more particularly of gold mining,) the law or that portion of it which relates to prospecting licenses or the search for gold. The matter might be adjusted in this way. Let the government grant any applicant a mining block of say 50 areas for an upset price of \$10, and make time 6 months with privilege of extension for another 6 months, on payment of a like sum of \$10. No licenses to be less than 50 areas in extent, nor any smaller sum than \$10 received by Commissioner of Mines. Any one really desirous of prospecting for gold who cannot invest \$10, had better keep out of the business totally. The person or persons then who take up 50 areas have 6 months to operate on it, and at the end of that time if they consider it a fair prospect, then they can have on payment of \$10 additional a further extension of 6 months, in which to take necessary steps to look about them to procure capital with which to take out proper mining licenses and stock their mine with machinery, etc., etc. As it is now, a man pays \$27.50 for 100 areas for 3 months, for \$13.75 additional he gets 3 months more, or in all 6 months. It does not give a *bona fide* miner or prospector time enough to look around him and interest necessary capital to go on with his operations which he may have got started, but for lack of means and a little time he has to drop out and someone else steps in and reaps the harvest. The man who invests his means in taking out a license, does a certain amount of work, and develops a gold claim, should be entitled to the utmost charity of the mining law and have every opportunity granted him to bring to a successful conclusion that which he has been the means of originating. In this case he will naturally use every endeavor to get his property into shape, and if it be a working vein he can easily interest the necessary capital. Under such a scale of prices and time the 50 area prospecting license would, I am convinced, come into general favor, and where \$100 is received by Mines Office now for gold prospecting licenses, I verily believe \$1000 would come in. Then again in proclaimed districts, where, it seems, a certain number of areas can be taken up at 50 cents per area. This matter might be regulated in the same manner, by allowing a prospecting license for gold good for 6 months to be taken up on payment of \$10, which would embrace 20 regular areas taken either in square or rectangular form, or for \$20 40 areas, etc., but no less number than 20 areas and \$10 payment to Mines Office. In like manner if the prospector at the end of 6 months wished to continue his prospecting that he be granted a similar length of time on payment of a similar sum to his first payment, which would give him one year in which to endeavor to locate his veins properly and procure necessary capital to work the same.

I approve of Mr. Fraser's idea of holders of areas in proclaimed districts, who do not feel able or willing to place the requisite number of days' labor on their respective areas, having privilege of paying \$2 per annum for each area for a certain term of years, not to exceed say 3 to 5 years, and the said amounts to be collected promptly by the Commissioner of Mines, default in any such payments constituting at once a forfeiture of the said areas after once being notified by the Mines Office. If the law was put in force thousands of dollars would be paid into the Mines Office which are now withheld on areas which now neither pay rental nor are worked. A rule of this kind would speedily put to an end this indiscriminate hobbling up of areas and holding of the same by speculators who never had the slightest intention of working or prospecting the same. The scale of prices also on these could be made somewhat lighter, according to the number of areas held. On all areas up to 25 in number, \$2 per acre; over 25 and up to 50, \$1.75; over 50 and up to 75, \$1.50; over 75 and up to 100, \$1.25. This scale would not prove burdensome, as any man wishing to control 100 areas would pay in revenues the sum of \$125 annually during the 3 or 5 years this clause was in force. The working of the mine by machinery and the producing of gold, of course, would do away with the payment of such rentals. It would also be understood that the end of the period of 3 to 5 years which this clause might cover, if the holder did not make some preparation for actual mining by the erecting of machinery for production of ore in necessary quantities for milling, it will at once constitute a forfeiture of his lease and enable the ground to be again taken up by any other miner or prospector wishing so to do. There are other matters on which I might dwell, but as I am new at the business I may get too deep water, and what I have written is only on the spur of the moment and may be very objectionable for all I know, and, if so, I would gladly have some of your many readers correct me and show me wherever I am in error. If they can so convince me I will willingly acknowledge it, and I simply would like to see what is done, done for the best and in the interests, not only of the prospector and miner, but of the Province as well.

Yours, &amp;c.,

April 19th, 1887.

OLDHAM.—We have always believed that the future of gold mining in the Province chiefly depends upon the development of large leads of low grade ore, and we are glad to find that Mr. J. E. Hardman, of Oldham, is making a practical test of the profits to be derived from mining such ore. He has recently sunk a shaft to the depth of 230 feet, and is now working a lead which in some places is five feet in width, the average width being about 2½ feet. So far the quartz has yielded gold at the rate of ten pennyweights to the ton, and constant employment is given to 28 men. Mr. Hardman has our best wishes for his success.

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