

SILVER MINING NEAR LAKE SUPERIOR.

THERE has long been a tradition that a silver mine existed on the shores of Lake Superior, and numerous have been the explorations in search of the coveted prize. It is matter of record that the native tribes, who have been for generations in possession of the northern region of Lake Superior, had such knowledge of the existence of a silver mine, that they extracted the precious metal, and with it ornamented their weapons. We have had reports at various periods that veins of silver ore had been traced, and specimens were exhibited in the cities of Canada; but no practical result followed. We are about entering on a new field of investigation, and this time, we believe, that a mine has been found, which ought to satisfy the most sanguine expectations of the proprietors. The fortunate owners are the stockholders of the Montreal Mining Company, an association which was one of the earliest explorers in the field—one that invested considerable sums in works of various kinds, and encountered many vicissitudes—so frequent indeed, that but few of the original associates retain any interest in the company. We see no reason to distrust the accounts which have been received at the head office here as to the result of several assays, independently conducted by proficient in the art of assaying, and free from the suspicion which often attaches to such statements. Experiments have been pursued in this country, and are now in progress in the United States, to ascertain the value of the ore. The results thus far reached prove that from each ton of ore a thousand to two thousand dollars worth of pure silver can be extracted. A product so enormous, so entirely beyond anything anticipated from our silver mines, must impart enormous value to the North Superior region, and restore vitality to many Companies which acquired mining rights along the shores of the lake. It would seem as if nature, in withholding from our northern country the attractions of soil and climate so estimable in the eyes of the agriculturist, has compensated us by sowing the mountain ranges with veins of the precious metals, and thus furnishing the strongest inducements to colonize and establish the country. If it had been demonstrated that the northern shores of Lakes Huron and Superior were as destitute of mineral wealth as they are unsuited to farming operations, long years must have rolled round before settlements or roads of communication could be established; but accepting this fact that the Montreal Mining Company has found in its estate veins of silver ore in quantities which yield at least one thousand dollars to the ton, we may go a step further and assume that around those mine communities will be gathered, able under the most favorable conditions to test the agricultural virtues of the soil. We do not envy Ontario its good fortune because though the immediate profits of the trader who minister to the wants of miners may be here, we must benefit indirectly by the added commerce consequent on a metallic export. Hitherto we have been dependent on the coarse products of the farm or forest. We could not, like California, rectify a balance against us for imports by shipments of gold, but if the expectations are realized, which the news from the silver mine of the Montreal Mining Company justifies us in anticipating, the effects on the trade of the country must be salutary. There is every reason to believe that the range of mountains extending north of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence contain mineral deposits of equal value with any yet discovered. A rumor has long been current that somewhere between the head waters of the Lievre and the Matawan branch of the stream which discharges itself at Three Rivers, a silver mine of extraordinary richness exists. The rumor is not destitute of foundation. Mr. Amond, of Ottawa, has in his possession some of the ore said to have been taken from a vein north of the Ottawa. The Indian from whom he purchased the specimens will not reveal his knowledge of the locality. Whether it be that the Indians are jealous of the intrusion of whites into their hunting grounds as fur hunters, or that some tradition reffects among them of the cruelties to the Indians inflicted by the Spaniards on this continent in order to extort a knowledge of gold mines, it is not the less a fact, that while the Indian will be communicative on every other subject, avoids and evades any discussion about mineral deposits; and whether sober or drunk—for he has often been questioned in both conditions—he keeps a guard upon his tongue that no temptation can induce him to relax.—*Daily News.*

GOLD AT RAWDON.

A CORRESPONDENT of the Montreal Gazette writing from Rawdon, on the 14th of December, 1868, says:—

Your remarks on the Assay of the St. Alphonse or Cathoart gold mines, worked by Mr. Dupuis and the analysis of Dr. Girdwood, of Montreal; Dr. Hays, of Boston, State Assayer, and Professor Beauregard, St. Louis, induce me to offer a few remarks as to the mines in the township of Rawdon and Chertsey, and the quantity of gold mixed with some silver they are found to contain by various Assays of Dr. Girdwood, on rocks taken from the lands of Mr. Bernard Cahill, Mr. A. Daly, of Rawdon, and Mr. Emond, of Chertsey. By that gentleman's certificates, dated 27th August last, it is found that some of this rock contains gold and silver to the ton as follows: Gold, \$24.12; silver, \$3.79, which makes \$32.91; another specimen, dated the 15th August, contains:—

Gold, 1 oz 13 dwt 1 gr., equal \$33.16
Silver, 1 oz 9 dwt 8 gr. 1.89

Equal to \$35.65

Other rock taken from the surface is found to contain from \$7 to \$13 per ton.

In your paper of the 7th instant, I see by an extract from the *Belleville Intelligencer* the result from the

Hastings gold region from the Richardson mines, the proceeds of one week's crushing, which yielded over \$7 per ton, from 25 tons of rock; the expense of extracting the same \$1.25 per ton, leaving a net profit of \$5.75 per ton. Now, Sir, if there is within the distance of 50 miles from Montreal, with all its acknowledged wealth, gold mine that yield four times the quantity of gold to the ton that the Hastings mines do, with such easy access, why is such unbounded wealth allowed to be unsought for? Some half tons of this rock are on their way to Philadelphia for a new process of analysis and others are to follow shortly, but capital is wanted to bring out the full result of this treasure.

The writer of this is not much instructed in the matter, but when I have seen the excitement heretofore that existed in going to the wilds of California, Australia, and two other mines in Canada, it is surprising that such great wealth should be allowed to lie dormant so near the greatest commercial city in the Dominion.

I read the letter of the Mayor of Montreal some months ago from the gold regions of Nova Scotia and the isolated localities of the crushing mills at work there, and the difficulty of access thereto; he would no doubt, be pleased to know that greater facilities and richer mines exist within six hours' drive of Montreal. Adding to this facility the numerous rivers and extensive water power which could be used for the crushing purposes, thereby avoiding the more expensive mode of crushing by steam.

The writer, although no miner or engineer, has made a short calculation of the probable cost and expenses in establishing a crushing operation with its probable results:—

Crushing Mill, by steam.....	\$5 000 00
Building for do.....	400 00
Ten men to work and crush the rock	
\$1 per day.....	10 00
Engineer \$1.50 per day.....	1 50
Interest on capital, \$400 do.....	4 00
For the time working.....	5 50
Fuel and incidental costs.....	19 00

Now, suppose a mill to crush ten tons per day, and the rock to yield only \$10 per ton, the result would be \$100 from \$21—expenses would leave a net profit of \$79 per day.

ENGLISH GRAIN TRADE.

THE following interesting report by Mr. H. Kains-Jackson, on the state of the grain trade during the month of November, appeared in the *Times* of December 4:—

The downward tendency of the value of wheat has been unbroken, and more discouragement has been observable in the grain trade throughout November, than at any time since harvest. The decline in price in England has also been paralleled abroad, in America and North Germany, and the same tendency is reported from California, while in Australia the promise of a fine harvest now about to commence, has had its natural effect. The urgent but relatively small wants of Spain have not even given an impulse to trade at Marseilles, where, as well as at Trieste, Spanish agents can easily obtain supplies. The crops of Russia are not now considered as was at one time anticipated in the southern districts, but they exceed expectation in the north; so that the area of last year's famine districts about the Dwina has now a plentiful supply, and the same plenty exists in Algeria. The total imports of wheat and wheat meal into the United Kingdom for the four weeks ended Nov. 23, are 658,564 qrs, a moderate but not large autumn supply. There have also been good supplies of barley and of maize, while farmers' supplies at local markets have continued good in quantity and quality. The imperial average of wheat is now 61s per qr., to which point it has descended, from 52s 3d at the beginning of the month, by regular gradations, a course that more depresses business than larger falls at longer intervals. It is evident that buyers are content with present rates, but they are obliged to act with extreme caution, as they know that to come forward freely, would be to turn the time against themselves, and more money would be at once demanded, whereas, to work easily with the public, the existing and not a higher, basis must be maintained. A useful comparison has been drawn this month of the relative value of grain, reduced to a common weight standard showing at per 100 lbs. :—

	s	d.
Wheat.....	9	2
Barley.....	8	0
Oats.....	9	2
Maize.....	7	8
Beans.....	8	9
Linseed Cake.....	11	7

The above estimate does not include the best wheat, but it shows clearly that, for feeding purposes, maize is cheapest, and that wheat is no dearer than oats. I may notice that many members of the corn trade look forward to weather markets and that prices will fluctuate according to the character of the winter. This view is rather adopted from habit than upon reasonable grounds, since this season, however sharp the cold, we know a sufficiency of wheat exists in the country until the return of open weather; it exists, moreover, in the hands of farmers, whose capital never allows them as a body to withhold supplies. If this home produce were in the hands of capitalist speculators the case would be altered, and a hard winter would give them opportunities of driving up value beyond its natural level. There has been no other influence besides liberal supplies that has depressed the price of wheat in November, but which is hardly likely to last beyond the month. Potatoes have been pressed for sale, and the prices—60s to 130s per ton for Scotch and English regents, 40s to 50s only

for French whites—have made them cheaper than any other food. The most marked fall in grain in the past month has been that of barley, which is, for secondary malting sorts, 3s to 4s cheaper; even the finest qualities are 2s lower, which is also about the reduction in foreign grinding sorts, of which the supply is good, but certainly not more than is absolutely required. An active and speculative trade has been carried on in maize, which has advanced, and since receded in price; 35s to 37s per qr. its present price, up to 39s for American, is above current demand. The late large supplies have come almost exclusively from ports east of Gibraltar, and American sources remain untouched. Oats and English beans are about 2s per qr lower, the mild season yet affording a fair quantity of feed in the fields.

OCEAN TRAVEL.

IN the call for the International Commercial Convention, held last summer at Portland, Maine, many interesting and important facts are told. Among these we notice the statement that travel across the Atlantic Ocean has increased more rapidly than the business of railroads—great as that has been on the leading lines. In 1850, when the European and North American Railway was proposed, as the means of shortening the transit between New York and London, two lines of steamers, or only two steamers per week, at that time crossed the Atlantic. In 1857, the number of weekly steamers to and from Europe had increased to seventeen each way, carrying over 200,000 passengers a year. In 1864, 135,317 crossed by steamers—30,803 eastward, 105,014 coming westward—showing that 60,000 at least were first-class passengers that year, business or pleasure travel, that always seek the shortest and most agreeable routes. The number of passengers that crossed the ocean by steamers in 1867 has not been reported, but a very large proportion has been of that class that would leave the steamers at Halifax, bound westward, or take the rail to Halifax in order to shorten the sea voyage to Europe. Estimating the number of these passengers at 100,000 per year, and dividing that number by one-half, it would give 50,000 through passengers yearly, or 80 passengers daily each way upon this line, from Portland to Halifax, for the 313 business days of the year, a greater through business than on any other line of equal extent in the world. It was a belief in this, that has procured the means for constructing this long line from Bangor to Halifax.

A large portion of this European travel comes from Canada and the West, which would seek the shortest route without being compelled to proceed to New York, the great port at this time of ocean travel. New Hampshire, Vermont, Canada, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, and all the Western States are interested alike in this matter. Montreal, Toronto, Detroit, Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis and Milwaukee passengers would seek the nearest European port by rail, which would become the port of call for all steamers sailing to Europe. By this line from Rutland to Portland the most direct one to the West is completed. Beyond the Hudson stretches the great West, the granary of the earth, where human food, produced more cheaply and in greater abundance than on any other soil, presses to the sea-board for a market; like the waters of a vast lake that cannot contain its accumulated masses, it will force new channels to the sea.—*N. Y. Bulletin.*

GREAT RAILWAY MONOPOLY.

(Concluded.)

RAILROAD SYSTEMS IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

KING Leopold, who had witnessed the good effect of railroads in England, immediately on his accession to the Belgian throne introduced the system as a portion of the public policy of his government. Notwithstanding much opposition he persevered until 317 miles of state railway was constructed at a total cost of £8,410,128. Private companies were permitted to build 900 additional miles, but on the condition that, after a limited period, the capital of the company having been absorbed by a system of redemption, amortization, the railroads should become the unbettered property of the state. The result of this was at first very unpromising; there were annual deficits of a large amount. But these were in consequence of large sums being paid out for interest, and small returns being derived from the road, still in process of construction. From 1852, this has been entirely changed, and the most satisfactory results have been derived. The effects on the country were of a most remarkable kind. In his evidence before the English Royal Commission, M. Fassiniaux, Director General of the posts, railways, and telegraphs in Belgium, thus testifies to the value of government direction of railroads:—

The experience obtained in Belgium of the working by the State of at least a portion of the railways existing in that country, is entirely in favour of that system. The results are better in a financial point of view, and, notwithstanding this superior financial result, the lines worked by the State are those kept in the best order. The working of them give the greatest satisfaction to the commercial world and to the public in general, as regards regularity and conveyance, cheapness of transit and conveyance of passengers. The State not being solely guided by the prospect of financial gain, but having constantly in view the interest of the public which it represents is in a better position than private companies to introduce all desirable improvements, not only as regards the efficient performance of the service, but also as regards the cost of conveyance, without, however, altogether disregarding the increase of revenue which its operations may bring into the public treasury.

Travellers from London to Brussels are readily enabled to compare the working of the Belgian with the