

Many mining schools in close proximity would act as a stimulus for each other, just as the multiplication of universities has acted in the field of general education. We can well imagine the conservatism and air of self-satisfaction that would prevail in our universities if there were but a few of them. Would not the same conservatism, self-satisfaction, and non-progressiveness pervade our mining schools if they should remain but few in number? Under such conditions, would they not be teaching methods long ago discarded by the wide-awake, progressive miner in practical work? Sharp competition will keep us all abreast of the times."

THE WORLD'S GOLD SUPPLY.

It is probable that when the records for the year 1906 shall have been made up, the gold production of the world will be found to have reached four hundred million dollars. The growth has been wonderfully rapid since 1890, when the production was but some 120 millions of dollars. Up to that time the increase had been steady, but during the following five years it became larger by an average yearly increase of about fourteen million dollars. During the last ten years this increase has been exceeded, so that the average yearly growth has been about twenty million dollars. A careful study of the gold mining industry almost forces the conclusion that this four hundred million dollar production will, at least, be maintained, and probably increased. It is believed that the stock of gold available for currency is increasing at the rate of a million dollars a day.

The effect of this flow of gold is attracting the attention of financiers throughout the world. An increase in the supply of the precious metals naturally tends to increase the price of commodities by putting more purchasing power in the hands of individuals, and hence increasing the demand. Whether such increase will be directly proportionate to the increase of gold in circulation is, however, a question upon which opinion is divided. Most writers on economic subjects argue that, in general, wages will not be likely to increase with the same rapidity as the prices of material, and it is held that salaries are the last items to advance. Whether the great increase in gold production which the last decade has witnessed will be a blessing, or the reverse, is something upon which men will continue to differ until the future shall have given us the answer.

THE NEW ONTARIO MINERAL ACT.

The mining bill that has been introduced in the Ontario Legislature, by the Minister of Mines, the Hon. Frank Cochrane, is still under debate as we go to press. We are, therefore, unable to say what will or will not be the mining law of the province for the next twelve months. As originally drafted, the new mining bill seeks to substitute one uniform system of acquiring mineral lands, in place of the complicated methods now in force. There are to-day no less than four ways by which a man may obtain the right to mine in the Province of Ontario: he may either purchase the land outright, or he may lease it, or he may stake it out in a mining division, or he may stake it in land that is outside a mining division. The conditions as to prices and amount of work required have been found to be beyond the comprehension of many prospectors, which is, perhaps, not surprising, seeing that a man may be a very excellent prospector and yet possess little or no education.

The new bill proposes a uniform system, which is, briefly, as follows: In the first place a person desiring

to hold mining lands must pay \$10.00 to the Province of Ontario for a miner's license, which will be valid for one year; the province will be divided into mining divisions, and in each division a mining record office will be opened, provided the demand for such an office shall make itself felt; a claim will be limited to a square of 20 chains, with north, south, east and west boundaries; the claim must be recorded in the office of the mining division in which it is situated, and the discovery will be subject to the approval and inspection of the mining inspector or his representative; should the report be favourable, the prospector will be required to do a certain number of days work within a certain specified, or shorter, time; after which he may buy the land at either \$2.50 or \$3.00 an acre, according to its situation, and he will then have an indefeasible title, without further working conditions.

It appears to us that there are several points to which objection may possibly be taken. The revenue from mining licenses, while it will amount to a considerable sum, is not to our mind a good source of revenue. It is a hardship to a poor man to take out a license, and is a discouragement, whereas the prospector should be encouraged to follow, what must be in any case, an arduous, and may possibly prove to be an unremunerative pursuit.

A little consideration will show the vast opportunities for fraud and litigation, that are opened by the insistence of an inspection previous to the acceptance of a location as valid. It is quite possible that occasions may arise in which an honest difference of opinion shall exist between the prospector and the inspector as to what constitutes "valuable" mineral. A mineral may be valuable, under certain conditions, although it has no quotation in the markets of the world. It might, for instance, be required for experimental purposes. Would it not be better to accept the statement of the prospector, made under oath, that the claim he had discovered was worthy of working from his own point of view? If he deems quartz, for instance, as sufficiently valuable to him to justify the expenditure of his time according to the regulations, and to warrant the payment of the many fees required by law, why should our inspector, human, and therefore fallible, prevent him from acquiring that quartz if he is willing to spend his time and money?

Special regulations are proposed for the regions north of the Height of Land, where there are some reasons to believe that petroleum, natural gas, salt, lignite and other minerals may eventually be found, yet which would not oftentimes show on the surface. In those regions prospecting permits may be granted, good for one year and covering 640 acres, for \$100.00. The holder will be required to spend \$2.00 an acre in actual work in developing his claim, and, upon making a discovery, may demand a lease at a rental of \$1.00 per acre, and an expenditure of \$2.00 an acre in work. These regulations appear to have been well thought out, as it is desirable to encourage the prospecting of the more distant parts of the province, and inducements should be held out to those who are willing to face the difficulties and arduous labours incidental to the explorations of our northern territories.

There are many other provisions in the bill which we hope to comment upon in a future issue.

During the debate on the new bill the Hon. Frank Cochrane stated that a discovery of anthracite had been made north of the Height of Land. Such a rumor has been made before, and not once but many times, but it seems to be totally without foundation or endorsement by competent authority. The CANADIAN MINING REVIEW has taken pains to investigate this