

MINING.

MANGANESE.

Nova Scotia is justly famed for producing the finest quality of manganese. No mineral yields larger profits with less outlay, as no machinery is required to prepare it for market. The fortunate discover of a deposit has only to mine and work the mineral, barrel it in old kerosene casks and ship to the English or United States markets. As the price varies from \$40.00 to \$120.00 per ton, according to quality, and as the demand is steadily increasing, it will be seen that the owner of a manganese mine is bound to reap a rich harvest. From the day when John Browne (miner) first opened the mine at Tenny Cape, to the present time, the search for the mineral has been vigorously prosecuted, and now deposits are being worked in several parts of the Province.

In Cape Breton, Mr. Mosely owns large deposits of low grade mineral. At Onslow Mountain, near Truro, Mr. Carter associated with some Halifax gentlemen, has been carrying on profitable mining for some time, and has developed an apparently inexhaustible supply of the mineral. This mine has been carefully managed, and has paid handsome profits from the start. Only the other day some Baltimore capitalists made an offer for the mine well up in the thousands which the owners refused. Mr. Miner Foster is pushing matters in his usual vigorous manner near Kentville, while what is likely to prove the most extensive deposit of the finest manganese yet found in this Province, is now being opened up under the management of Mr. John Browne, near Hopewell, Pictou Co.

PROMOTERS.

Some capitalists, who have visited this Province with the intention of investing in our mines, have departed in disgust, and reported that developed and undeveloped properties are held at such exorbitant prices that no business could be done here. That any *bona fide* capitalist should have thus been driven away is a great pity, but the blame lies too often with the capitalist. Instead of dealing directly with our miners, they are generally met by "promoters," middle men, who make it a point to bond as many properties as possible, and then hold them at very high prices.

Some of these men have done good service in the past, and are honorable and upright in all their dealings; others, too many in fact, are simply "sharks" of the meanest description.

With barely enough money to pay their board bills, they drop down on us, and claim to have control of unlimited capital. They bluster and swagger, condemn our miners with blood curdling oaths, and give glowing accounts of the wonders they have accomplished in dim and distant lands. Woe be unto the unfortunate mine-owner who falls into their hands!

As a great favor they visit mines at the expense of the owners. If the mines have been idle, the owners have to dip deep into their pockets, and put things in order for their visitors. They come, they see, they conquer—the owners—and end by bonding the mines. Then their expected remittances do not arrive, and a loan is requested to wing their flight to the land of the millionaire.

Sometime by a fluke they return with would-be purchasers. A game of bluff is now in order. The mines suddenly dwindle in value, an eighth of the original price, part cash, part stock in to-be-formed companies, is offered. If the terms are refused the owners are roundly abused, and although their mines are not sold, they are. Loans and advances are never repaid, and they are lucky if they escape heavy actions for services rendered. Experiences of this kind are by no means uncommon, and is it any wonder when a real capitalist comes on the field he is not always recognized?

Several of our New York subscribers have written to the office making enquiry respecting certain gold mining properties in Nova Scotia. The information wanted was fortunately easily obtained, but as before stated in THE CRITIC, it would be well for the owners of mines to furnish us with the latest and most reliable information respecting their mining operations. Of course we understand that when properties are first being prospected, owners do not care to give publicity to what is being done, but in the case of developed mines it is different, and the news which the owners might supply, would give a stimulus to mining enterprises throughout the country.

A grave danger threatens the future of some branches of mining, unless the mining laws are amended at the coming session of the Local Parliament. Lead is taken up from the government under a license to search over five miles. At the last session the act was amended, so that silver, which is generally present in greater or less quantities in lead ore, should go with the lead. Before the amendment, (in order to be safe) a lead property had to be taken up under a right of search, and also under a gold base to cover the gold and silver. Even with the amendment, trouble is still likely to arise. A takes up a lead property under the amendment act, which gives him the right to any silver the ore may contain. B can still cover the same property under a gold base, and as the galena ore contains some gold, enter the thin edge of the wedge for a future legal contest. The government should refuse to grant gold bases over property covered by rights to search for other minerals, and in this way protect lead prospectors, who at present are working under great disadvantages.

Manganese belongs to the owner of the soil. In Pictou County valuable deposits of manganese are found in conjunction with the iron ores, which appertain to the Crown. As the iron ores are held by parties under government leases, and as the owners of the soil have leased the right to mine manganese to other parties, a nice little contest may be expected unless the government introduces some measure to obviate the difficulty.

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