

MINING.

At Heron Bay, which is distant from Port Arthur, 200 miles east, a silver mine is now being opened up. This mine was discovered several years ago, but it has never been thoroughly worked.

At Maggot River, 120 miles east of Port Arthur, is a fine zinc mine, owned by Frank Keefer. The mine is situated twelve miles back from Lake Superior, and the means for shipping ore are at present unsatisfactory. 300 tons so far have been taken out.

Further work in the North Crosscut, on the 190 foot level of the Coxheath Copper Mine, fully confirms the recent discovery there of an additional body of ore. The new vein is about four feet thick, and the ore averages, apparently, 8 per cent. copper.

A. Hayward, who brought into town, two weeks since, a brick of gold, weighing 70 ounces, came in last week with another handsome brick, weighing 174 ounces. Mr. Hayward states the latter to be the yield from the last crushing of 121 tons of quartz. The Empress Mine, Robbrow, of which Mr. Hayward is the successful manager, is fast coming to the front as one of the best paying mines in the Province.

To the Editor of the Critic:—

Sir,—The Province of Nova Scotia has very limited sources of revenue, and the revenues derived from such sources are quite inadequate for the necessities of our Provincial Government. Gradually, from year to year, the thin edge of the wedge of direct taxation is being introduced, so that soon, if no relief comes in the way of a re-adjustment of our Dominion subsidies, or an extension of the indirect sources of our revenue, the Provincial tax gatherer will be at every door. A writer in the *Toronto Week*, some months ago, ably argued against any increase of Dominion subsidies, as being dangerous to the integrity of the union, and as being a thriftless policy tending to encourage the Provinces to "reap where they have not sown." That writer suggested the wisdom of a re-adjustment as between the Dominion and the Provinces of the sources of revenue, as a better means to the end. In other words, to let the Provinces be charged with the duty of legislating with respect to some particular revenue-yielding department, as the *Excise*, and to appropriate the revenue derived therefrom to Provincial uses. However this may be, two things are clear, that a long time would have to intervene before such a re-adjustment could be had, and whether we receive an increase of our local revenue by means of increasing our present subsidies, or by the means suggested by the *Toronto* wise man, we will equally do so at the expense of the spoliation of the central government; and after all, whatever system we adopt to despoil the Federal Government, we cannot hope to receive more from that source—by way of subsidy than we yield to it—by way of revenue.

On the other hand, have we ever enquired what sources of revenue we have within ourselves? If any enquiries of the kind have ever been made by any Provincial Government, no attempt has ever been made to realize a revenue therefrom. Hitherto, all our energies have been directed, like the false priests of Baal, to calling loudly from "morn to eve" upon our gods at Ottawa, "who, mayhap, are asleep or out hunting." After eighteen years of supplication, we are at last convinced they are incurably deaf. We must now proceed to light our own altar fires with a spark from the holy altar of human thrift and prudence. I propose, through your columns, to point out one or two sources already within the power of our Provincial Legislature, which, if wisely organized, would add a large sum to our Provincial Revenue.

Our mines are already an important source of revenue, yielding nearly Ten Thousand Dollars a year to the Provincial Exchequer by way of royalty. No Local Administration has ever appropriated a dollar of this fund to the encouragement of that industry beyond what was necessary to support the Minister and his clerks, who survey off the mining areas to applicants, and give receipts for the money paid in as royalty.

This happy-go-lucky policy, with reference to our mines, will not do, if we expect them to be an important source of revenue. It follows, that any policy that would tend to augment the yield from—say our gold mines—would tend to increase our revenue from that source, since the royalty payable is according to the value of gold produced.

First, then, it is computed that only about one-third of the gold-producing area of the Province has been prospected, and that about one-half of that limited area is held under lease or license by speculators who have no intention to work their claims. Many large, and it is supposed, rich areas have been held by speculators under lease for fifteen years, and no attempt upon their part has been made to develop their properties. This is an evil that should at once be remedied. We would suggest a remedy, short, quick, and effective—immediate forfeiture of their properties, and a revesting of them in the Crown; a law providing for a fair amount of development of mining areas every year by owners thereof, and a weekly return of all work done to the Department of Mines, and publication of such returns in the *Royal Gazette*. The writer is personally aware of very rich leads, situated on mining areas, upon which no work has been done for fifteen years, and the owner refuses to sell at any reasonable price. The solution of this difficulty can only be had after the method adopted by Alexander the Great, when he speedily undid the mysterious Gordian knot with his sword, and as in his case, immediately the riches of Asia were laid at his feet, so in the present, immense financial good would result to the Province and its treasury.

(To be Continued in our next).

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