

eggs which a nation must protect with great care. A large country like ours, indeed, has so many millions of acres of good lands that land speculation, though very prejudicial, can be overlooked; but, as regards mining, it is very different. Such a thing as "mineral lands" extending over large tracts of country does not really exist; and nature has been more parsimonious with mineral deposits than speculators suppose when they buy thousands of acres in a district thinking they have a mine under every lot. No! good mines, even in a very large country, are always scarce, for geological reasons (mineral deposits geologically being only accidents), for technical reasons (many deposits not being valuable because of the great difficulties of mining them or of treating the ore), for economic reasons (mineral substances being often found too far from market, or from a railway, or being in too small quantity), etc.; then, once a good mine is discovered, its permanent working by a good company should be encouraged and assured. To attain this end, the country must keep the mineral rights in its hands so as to be free, when a mineral deposit is found anywhere, to give the right to mine it to a good company, and if this right is given without charge of any sort before profit is made, it will assure those going to work every possible chance of success and it will encourage capitalists to try and develop every place where the surface indications are good, because the only money to risk will be the necessary money to test the ground. It is but just, however, that the laws should oblige these capitalists, from the day they make a profit, to suitably remunerate the original discoverer. In that way, instead of having thousands and thousands of acres of so called "mineral lands" bought* and lying for years and years unprospected, unworked and in no way profitable to anybody, we shall see on the contrary, here and there, some mines actively worked expending vast amounts in the country, bringing workmen in, creating around them villages and towns; and every one of these mines will be more benefit to the Government and to the country than thousands of granted mining locations undeveloped and not only totally useless from a mining point of view, but doing much damage to the other interests of the country and often to the speculators themselves.

As will be seen from the following suggestions which I venture to make in conclusion, nothing could be easier than to change entirely the old system of selling "mining lands" and to attain the results just stated. The national mining property would then be submitted, in its general

* See "Plan of part of the North shore of Lake Superior showing Thunder and Black bays, etc.," published Toronto, 1st August, 1883, (department of Crown Lands), and showing how much "mineral lands" is taken up in that region.