

# British Columbia Mining Critic.

*"I am Nothing, if Not Critical."*—Shakespeare.

## British Columbia Mining Critic.

ISSUED WEEKLY.

Devoted to the Interests of Mining and the Protection of Investors.

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*Letters from practical men on topics connected with mining, mining machinery, mining laws, and matters relating to the mineralogical development of Canada, are always welcome.*

*Manufacturers and Dealers in appliances used in and about mines are invited to send illustrations and descriptions of new articles.*

*Views and descriptions of mines and mining locations solicited.*

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## A WANT OF THE SLOCAN.

A great need of the Slocan country at this present is more capital, with experienced men engaged to invest it properly in claim development. There are and have been in that great silver district mines capable of paying from the grass roots, but a capital of \$300 to \$500, which is all that the working miner often has wherewith to open up for shipping his promising claim or group of claims, is usually altogether insufficient for the purpose. Hence the abandonment of many a very likely opportunity, often too obtained on a low priced option quickly terminable.

Not a few claims, left for the time being unworked from lack of capital, are thus likely some day, in the hands of men stronger financially, to yield excellent returns, alike in ore shipments and profits. Too much has been built on the fact that the Slocan is "a poor man's country." This it certainly is in a sense, speaking relatively and by comparison with other precious metal districts of B. C., but even there it is very rare for a man or group of men to start successfully in mine development with a working capital of \$1000 or under. Yet this is often more than the total sum wherewith a Slocan man starts cheerily the work of claim development. To

country" argument, have been attracted many hundreds of men, fresh from North West, Manitoba or other ranches, men capable of successful plough and spade work among grain or roots, but altogether unused to blasting, tunnelling, lode following and other mine work. Naturally enough, many of those Slocan settlers fresh from the fields have made failures of their mine ventures and also not achieved any very striking success even as mine workers. To day the best working miners in the Slocan hail from Montana and other mining States of the Republic—a fact which has to be frankly, if reluctantly, admitted—and these men naturally secure the first and best openings, where such are under the control of practical mine owners, incorporated or otherwise. In time no doubt the sturdy men from non-mining parts of Canada and elsewhere will gain sufficient experience in the Slocan and elsewhere to become as successful workers as the American silver-lead miners, who have migrated thither. But in the interim the lot of the whilom agriculturist turned miner will not usually be easy, whilst his mistakes of method will often prove costly to himself and others.

The Slocan is developing steadily, despite the continuing fall in silver, so great are usually the value of its deposits, but this development will continue to be gradual, rather than rapid, so long as so many of the best mine workers of the country are backed by but scanty capital.

There are still many and excellent opportunities in the Slocan for capital to embrace with profit, despite the depreciation of silver, though we suppose that for a while at least gold loving British investors will continue to be somewhat chary of investing in a silver country, and prefer even to take very, very doubtful chances in such things as Clondyke syndicates, often, by the bye—more often, indeed, than not—intended to be officered and worked by men of influential status, but without unpossessed of the merest atomic knowledge of the frozen far northland and the proper methods of exploiting for other than promoting purposes its frost bound hidden