

however, having practically disappeared the management decided that the allowance should cease; and that the men were to be paid merely for the coal at the rate of 55 cents per ton. The miners contended that they could not earn a fair day's wage on the basis of 55 cents per ton of coal, and consequently went out on strike. The coal company then offered sixty cents per ton, and the miners agreeing to this price as a fair compromise, work at the collieries was, without further delay, resumed.

A Major Halder, acting as special commissioner for Reuter's Press Agency, has recently given his opinion through interviews with local newspaper representatives, on our mining laws, the condition of labour in our mines, and also on other points. Major Halder has been in British Columbia barely two months, and we believe we are correct in stating that he has remained for the greater part of that time in Vancouver, and has certainly not visited any of our important mining centres. He, however, poses as an adverse critic, for which he has been thanked by that sapient body calling itself the Mining Committee of the B.C. Board of Trade. This certainly ought to be rebuke enough for any man. But to return, Major Halder's chief contention is that miners in this country are too highly paid, and he advocates as essential to the profitable working of our mines the employment of cheap Asiatic in substitution of white labour. Mine-owners and even Canadian shareholders in British Columbia mining companies will thank Major Halder for nothing for this piece of advice, both on grounds of patriotism and political economy. We have modelled our mining system a good deal after that of the United States, and we anticipate therefrom equally good results. The United States is at present the greatest mining country in the world, and, there, from the first mine labour has been paid for at a high rate. Is an imaginary line demarking the international boundary going to affect the future of our mines, other things being equal, as they undoubtedly are. As to our mining laws, with only one or two exceptions appertaining perhaps to the locating of ground, they have so far been found to cover all requirements, but in any case Major Halder is not likely to be consulted with regard to any changes considered necessary. Meanwhile, we observe, with a great deal of pleasure, that Mr. J. D. Kendall, the resident partner of the firm of Bewicke, Moreing & Co., in Vancouver, has taken up the cudgels in defence of our mining system against this recently imported and self-imposed critic, and in an interview Mr. Kendall, while pretending to disbelieve that Major Halder has made the statements attributed to him, directly challenges him to do so in writing and over his own signature. Mr. Kendall thus remarks: "I know that people from the Old Country very often allow themselves to criticize before they have time to understand, and I have a very vivid recollection of the severe rebuke that was administered by the director of the Ontario Bureau of Mines to an engineer of this class from the other side of the Atlantic, who had scarcely arrived in Ontario when he began to criticize the laws, etc., of the Province and compare them unfavourably with what he knew of South Africa. The director, in his report for 1898, after showing that the would-be critic could not have read the mining laws he seemed so anxious to criticize, concluded with these words: 'A man who will not qualify himself by information to express an in-

telligent criticism is not one to be depended on as counsellor of guide in the business affairs of men, but I cannot imagine that any one occupying the responsible position of Reuter's correspondent could be guilty of any similar act of rashness."

And now "Governor" Mackintosh has been dubbed by General Warren of Spokane and Rossland, the "Cecil Rhodes of Canada." It is to be hoped for Mr. Mackintosh's sake that the incident is not an evil omen. A previous mining promoter of B.C. ventures who was similarly styled by enthusiastic friends, Mr. E. Grant-Gowan, of London, England, cannot be said to have realized the high expectations thus raised.

It is not surprising to learn that the unfortunate Goldfields of British Columbia, Limited, has decided to abandon some, and is doubtful about others of the Coast district claims, which were acquired by it from the Channe Mining Company. Those who should know, stated at the time of the English company's purchase, that the Channe undertaking had got rid at sufficient advantage to itself of some properties of very doubtful worth. This fact the Goldfields of British Columbia, Limited, is now tardily discovering, as it would seem. Nor has that company acquired the Albert Canyon townsite, a hole in the mountains of little real value, which was boomed as of big prospective worth, if we are not mistaken, in the company's glowing prospectus. There has, it is said, been found some deficit in the title. In any case the real loss involved in the failure of transfer cannot be regarded as great. The company has, however, abandoned some of its mining properties, as the auditors reluctantly report, and the prospects of its subsidiary companies are dubious indeed. The titled Canne, the Earl of Essex, evidently a more or less ornamental figure-head of the company, cannot be congratulated on the results obtained, or likely to be obtained by a concern at the heart of which he was placed by Mr. Grant-Gowan—since retired—and his promoting collapse. And now the reports from the Waverley and Tangier mines (?) are unsatisfactory. Oh, what a fall was there!

A great deal of quite unnecessary trouble has been created by the somewhat ambiguous wording of section 4 of this year's Mineral Act Amendment Act. The clause reads as follows: "A free miner's certificate shall run from the date therefore and shall expire at midnight on the thirty-first day of May next after its date, or some subsequent thirty-first day of May." A good many people construed this as meaning that their licenses issued prior to the 31st of May must be renewed on that date and in consequence the Mining Recorders' offices in many districts were recently besieged by applicants seeking renewals. The Attorney-General has stated that persons having thus acted simply contributed gratuitously to the Provincial Treasury, for it was quite clear that the enactment was not intended to affect free miners' certificates issued previous to the 31st of May of this year. Of course, those studying the Act closely would at once see that the saving clause in section 20, sufficiently protected their interests until the coming into force of the Act on the 1st of May, but this, notwithstanding, all will agree it is most important that the wording of our Acts of Parliament, especially those relating to mining, should be so distinct and clear as to afford no opportunity for uncertainty with regard to their meaning.