

statutes passed at the recent session. The "Coal Mines Regulation Act," the "Steam Boiler Inspection Act," the "Water Courses Act" and the "Companies Act" have all been subjected to some amendment.

There are now quite a number of statutes dealing with the regulation of coal mines. The Act passed this year is rather in the nature of an amplification of the law as it previously existed, than one introducing any change in its principles. It is an attempt to apply the lessons of experience to mitigate the dangers of this most dangerous of all employments. Accidents in coal mines are to a considerable extent preventable just as accidents on railways are to a considerable extent preventable. It is often difficult, in fact impossible, to determine just in what way any particular accident could have been prevented after it has occurred. But the experience of Great Britain has certainly shown that strict regulations along certain lines does reduce the aggregate number of accidents, and the loss of life and destruction of property incident thereto. The general consensus of opinion will be that the continuous efforts of our Legislature to obtain a complete and effective body of regulations to this end, are efforts put forth in the right direction. Such legislation is not, however, to be perfected in a day and this subject is likely to be the almost annual care of the Legislature for some time to come. A clause has been inserted in the "Coal Mines Regulation Act" requiring the manager of a coal mine to be a British subject. It may be a very desirable thing that the managers of coal mines should be British subjects. It might also be desirable to pass legislation requiring that they should be so. But in an Act dealing with the qualifications of experience and efficiency such a test is not germane to the purpose of the Act. It is quite obvious that a man's nationality has nothing whatever to do with his efficiency as a colliery manager any more than his religion. If one class of employment in British Columbia is to be closed to any who are not British subjects, the question is at once raised as to what classes of employment should remain open. Our Legislature once took a bold step in the direction of restriction on national lines and the effects were so disastrous that it hastily repealed its action. It would have been fortunate if it could have repealed the effects as well. In this case the effects are likely to be small, because only a limited number of people are affected. But the principle of a regulation of this kind is one which should be studied before it is put in operation. It is never safe to apply a principle in a particular instance, for a particular purpose, which is incapable of general application without injurious consequences.

In the "Water Courses Act," section 29 which reads:

"29. If, after a record of all the water in any stream has been made, for mining purposes, any placer mines are located and *bona fide* worked below the point of diversion on the stream, the owner of such placer mines shall be entitled to the continuous flow in the stream past the mines of forty inches of water if two hundred inches be diverted, and sixty inches if three hundred inches be diverted, and no more, except upon paying to the holder of the record compensation equal to the amount of damage sustained by him on account of the

allowance to the claim of such extra quantity of water; and, in computing such damage, the cost of the ditch shall be considered. 1897, c. 45, s. 29." Is altered to read as follows:—

"29. In any case where all the water in any stream has been recorded for mining purposes and placer mines, either before or after the date of such record, are located and *bona fide* worked either above or below the point of diversion, the owner or owners of such placer mines shall be entitled to the continuous flow in said stream past, or to divert into or upon or through, such mine or mines sixty inches if two hundred or less be diverted by such record, and ninety inches if three hundred inches be diverted by such record, but no more; and such owner or owners shall be entitled to the full use of such water for such distance above or below such mine or mines as shall be necessary for the continuous and economical workings of said mine or mines and the carrying away of tailings and debris arising therefrom: Provided, however, that such owner or owners may divert a greater quantity than above specified upon paying to the holder of said record compensation for the damage he may thereby sustain; and in computing such damage the cost of the ditch shall be considered."

The effect is to increase the water rights of those *bona fide* working placer claims either above or below the point of diversion, under any water record held by others. The amendments to the "Steam Boilers Inspection Act" are largely by way of correcting certain unworkable amendments to the original Act made in 1902 in relation to those holding or entitled to service certificates to act as engineers. It makes no changes in regard to the inspection of steam boilers.

We have received the prospectus and copies of circulars issued by a company recently promoted in New York, entitled the Great Cariboo Gold Company, which claims to have acquired a large area of ground on Lightning Creek. The statements regarding the value of the property and on other points, appears to us to be gross exaggerations, but we refrain for the present from further comment pending the result of the enquiries we are now instituting.

A conspicuous instance of the quickening power of productive gold mining is afforded by Western Australia, the progress of which colony, now one of the States of the Australian Commonwealth, has been truly remarkable since gold mining became its most prominent industry. It should be an object lesson to British Columbia, which, though it may not have such rich goldfields, certainly possesses an abundance of mineral wealth awaiting development and utilization. In a recently published article, by the Premier of Western Australia, the following occurs: "The discovery of gold at Coolgardie occurred in 1893. It was rapidly followed by more important discoveries in other portions of the State, until to-day the State stands as one of the greatest gold producers upon earth. She has produced 10,591,287 fine ounces of gold, worth £44,989,354 (nearly \$225,000,000), she has paid £9,088,182 (\$45,440,910) in dividends from