

Association may be congratulated upon the removal from the Statute Book of a condition which seriously prejudiced mining in this Province, frightened foreign investors and complicated the difficulties of lawyers employed in investigating title to mining properties.

Under the law as it stands to-day, a man is obliged to take out a miner's license for which he pays \$5, before he can acquire or hold a claim, and he must renew this license every year on a certain date.

If he neglects to renew this license on the due date, his title to his mining properties become void and although he can within six month of the expiration of his mining license obtain a special free miner's certificate upon payment of a fee of \$15, which will entitle him to hold all his properties then in his possession, this special license is of no avail against anyone who may have jumped the licensee's property between the expiration of his license and the taking out of the special license.

In other words, he has to pay a fine of \$10 for negligence in not taking out his license at the proper date, and is also liable for the same offence to lose absolutely any property however valuable which anyone else chooses to jump during the period in which he has no valid existing miners' license.

For instance: Jones, a tourist from England is attracted by the mineral showings in Rock Creek, where he happens to be hunting, and is induced to take out a license, purchase a claim and spend certain moneys in the development of it.

He returns to England. In his absence his agent forgets to renew Jones' license. The claim appreciates in value and a professional jumper who "keeps tab" of such matters, observing that Jones has not renewed his license, puts in his stakes and jumps the claim.

The innocently negligent tourist loses his claim. He may pay the fine and take out a special license which will entitle him to hold any other claims he may have which were not worth jumping, but the one good claim has been jumped and can not be recovered.

We venture to assert that there is no other instance in our law of the punishment of innocent negligence by total confiscation of property and the knowledge that the negligence of an agent, or a man's own forgetfulness might subject him to forfeiture of rights honestly earned and paid for has been one of the causes which have made mining in British Columbia unpopular with foreign investors.

Clause 5B of the Placer Act reads at present: "In case any person shall allow his free miner's certificate to expire, he may at any time within six months from the date of such expiration, obtain from the proper officer, upon payment of a fee of \$15, a special free miner's certificate. Such special certificate so far only as such title depends upon such person having a free miner's certificate, shall have the effect of reviving the title of the person to whom it is issued to all placer claims which such person owned at the time of the lapse of his former certificate, except such as under the provisions of the Placer Mining Act may have become the property of some other person at the time of the issue of such special certificate and shall operate as a free miner's certificate until midnight of the 31st May

next after issue. In the case of a joint-stock company the fee for such special certificate shall be \$300," etc.

The amendment proposes to cut out after "such special certificate" inclusive and from the words "except such" to "special certificate" inclusive, and to alter the fee for a joint-stock company's special certificate from \$300 to \$150.

Under this amendment a man who has neglected to renew his free miner's license will have six months' grace in which to renew: he will have to pay a fine as it were of \$10 for not taking his license out at the proper time, but his property will be unjumpable during those six months of grace.

It will be a bad blow to the "jumping interest" but a boon to the foreign investor.

As far as we are aware there is no such thing as a miner's license in the States. It would, we are told, be contrary to the Constitution if there were, and in any case it is certainly in the interest of the Government itself and that most important matter, the revenue, to give security of title and to discourage "jumpers" who are merely beasts of prey, a menace to the community, and an incentive to law-breaking.

At the meeting between the Cabinet and the Executive of the Provincial Mining Association, Mr. Wölley ventured to go a step beyond his brief and plead that in cases of delinquent taxes the property holder received of his delinquency from the department affected, so in cases of unrenewed miners' licenses, the delinquent licensee should one month from the expiration of his term of grace, receive by registered letter addressed to an address endorsed upon his original certificate, a notice of the fact that his license had not been renewed.

If this suggestion is adopted, as the Premier seemed to think that it might be, the holder of mining property would in this particular be put upon the same footing as holders of other property in British Columbia and would have no just cause for complaint if by continued neglect he forfeited his title.

Under this amendment Clause 9 of the present Placer Act would be amended by inserting at line 7 after the word "shall" the words "subject to the provisions of Clause 5B as amended," and the the spirit of the amendment is expected to control all miners' licenses whether as regards quartz or placer claims.

Before leaving this subject it is only fair to congratulate the Government upon the improvement already effected by making all miners' licenses renewable upon the same date. This was a step in the right direction. Add to this the present amendment and there will be no excuse left for "innocent negligence."

NOTES FROM PHOENIX.

(From our own Correspondent.)

NOW that coke shipments are arriving with some regularity at the smelters, there is again considerable mining activity in Phoenix. Forces at the mines in this district have been somewhat increased, but for a time men were scarce. A considerable amount of work has been done on the 100-foot level of the Old Ironsides mine. This level will have its exit to the surface by what is known as No. 3 tunnel. Shipments for the past six weeks have been cut down to half the former rate. When the full blast of four furnaces is again running at the Granby smelter, however, shipments