

as it did May 22nd last, I will have to request that the conditions contained in my letter of that date be complied with before issuing Form 1.

"Yours obediently,

"D. A. McBEATH,
"Mining Recorder."

The only explanation possible of such a letter appeared to be that the decision of the Department upon the Attorney-General's advice had not been forwarded to the Nelson office. That, however, was not the case. The Minister of Mines had communicated with the Nelson office and the Gold Commissioner had simply refused to carry out the instructions of the Department. Upon these instructions other offices were issuing certificates but the Nelson Gold Commissioner remained a source of higher authority than the Minister of Mines. The following letter from the Minister of Mines can only be regarded as a confession of weakness. He virtually admits his inability to supervise the actions of the Gold Commissioner of Nelson district:—

"Department of Mines,

"Victoria, 13th September, 1899.

"Sir:—I beg to acknowledge your letter of the 6th

The phrase "therefore it is possible my decision in this matter may not have been brought to Mr. McBeath's notice," is delightful; and the spectacle of a Minister of the Crown, finding the Gold Commissioner obdurate in defiance, "begging" the Gold Commissioner's subordinate officer to obey the mandate of the Department, is, if sufficiently humiliating for him, intensely ludicrous to everyone else. Did this humble appeal have the desired effect? Not a bit of it. Mr. Turner prevented Mr. McBeath from carrying out the decision of the Department, and when he left for England left precise written instructions with the acting Gold Commissioner that Form 1 was not to be issued till his view of the law had been carried out in express defiance of the ruling of the Department under the advice of the Attorney-General. The result eventually was that the Department caved in as the following letter shows, dated the 29th December, 1899. The date is highly important:—

"Department of Mines,

"Victoria, 29th December, 1899.

"Sir:—In further reference to the correspondence that has taken place in connection with the record of assessments on a mineral claim before a certificate of



■ How the Noble Siwash Travels in the Omineca District.

inst., stating that the Mining Recorder at Nelson had refused to issue Form 1 in respect of your application for a certificate of improvements for the ——— mineral claim.

"I find that the instructions with respect to your claim were sent to Mr. Turner and not to Mr. McBeath, therefore it is possible my decision in this matter may not have been brought to Mr. McBeath's notice.

"I will now write to Mr. McBeath and beg him to carry out the instructions conveyed in my letter to Mr. Turner of the 11th August in respect of your claim.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"J. FRED HUME,
"Minister of Mines."

improvements can issue, I beg to inform you that the Gold Commissioners have been instructed not to issue a certificate of improvements for any mineral claim until the books of the Mining Recorder of the division in which such claim is situate show that certificates of work amounting to \$500 have been duly issued and recorded.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"J. FRED HUME,

"Minister of Mines."

All that appears to be now necessary to complete the incident is a further letter from the Minister of Mines "begging them to see that their respective Gold Commissioners carry out the instructions of the Department. What a travesty of executive govern-