

MINING.

Mineral samples sent to the CRITIC office, accompanied by a fee of one dollar, will be submitted to a thoroughly competent assayer for a preliminary examination and slight test of contents. The results will be communicated to senders of samples, and if full assays are deemed advisable, they will be notified and instructed as to amount of fees to be remitted.

MINING SURVEYS.—It becomes our duty to bring to the notice of our readers a case of tinkering with the Mines Act, during the last session of the Local Legislature, that works to the serious disadvantage of prospectors and discoverers. An agitation should be commenced without delay to have the obnoxious section of the act repealed at the coming session of the Legislature. For the benefit of our readers who have not taken particular notice of what has been going on, we would explain that the laws relating to mines were revised, consolidated and re arranged during the session of 1892, so that the Mines Act is now known at law as the "Mines and Mineral Act of 1892." The actual provisions of the familiar Mines Act are nearly all retained in the new act, although the wording is changed in some cases and some sections transposed. In this article it is our purpose to speak only of section 10 of the act of 1892, which is a serious change in the manner of laying out and locating gold areas. The section reads thus: "All mines of gold or of silver shall hereafter be laid off in areas of two hundred and fifty feet length, true meridian, north and south, and one hundred and fifty feet east and west." To show the great change from the former and familiar method, we will quote the words from the old section:—"quartz mines shall, so far as local peculiarities or other circumstances may permit, be laid off in areas of one hundred and fifty feet lengthwise of the general course of the strata, and two hundred and fifty feet across." Under the old system a prospector could trace his lead by the boulders or the run of the strata or rock ledges, make up the description of his property, stake it off, go into the Mines Office and take it up without any fear of losing the benefit of his discovery. Under the old system, the bearing of the "course of the strata," used in surveys of the Department of Mines, would sometimes cause disappointment to prospectors in running off areas. These disappointments were generally the results of mis-judging the distances sufficient to take in the coveted location, or not taking up enough areas. But whatever difficulties would naturally occur under the old system are trifles to what meets the prospector under the new. In referring to the section to see how to take up his areas to cover his discoveries, the prospector finds he must take the areas 250 feet north and south by the course of the true meridian of the place, and 150 feet true east and west. His amazement may be imagined when it becomes a reality to him that the law has been altered, he cannot find a meridian near him, he does not know how to make one, and the Mines Department does not keep any meridians on hand, nor can explain to his troubled head what connection there will be between his lead and the meridian when it is laid down. Not one in a hundred would hit upon an expedient to find out how to make up his description, unless he should take up a large number of needless areas at considerable cost. To explain why this true meridian regulation should cause so much trouble we will illustrate it in this way. It so happens in Nova Scotia that the majority of quartz veins run nearly east and west by the compass, and prospectors have been in the habit of giving the course of leads as shown by their compasses. It also so happens in Nova Scotia that our compass needles do not point to the true meridian, but to a point at a large angle from the meridian. The direction to which our compass needles point is known as the magnetic north, and this direction is always varying, causing lots of trouble to the land surveyor in running his lines. Nature in laying out the quartz veins of this province adopted very nearly the east and west course shown by our pocket compasses, and prospectors have been satisfied to use it. There is no connection between the run of the leads and the true meridian, when looked at by the eye of sight, whatever connection the mining sharp may see when he wishes to do a discoverer out of his claim. For an illustration of what may happen; a surveyor pointed out to us this fall a case in which some prospectors wanted to take up a new place, marked a starting-point near the lead outcrop, went to the Mines Office, put in a description that by the old system would have taken in about two thousand feet of the run of their lead, and went back to work in blissful ignorance that they had not covered three hundred feet of the lead. The position of the meridian can only be laid down in any given locality by taking observations of the sun at noon, or the polar star in certain positions; and is an operation requiring great care. The general custom throughout the world is to lay out mining properties by the general course of the mineral belts which is the natural and easily understood way. We are forced to the conclusion that we have in this province a class of mining operators who through ignorance or malice have placed a stumbling-block in the way of their less fortunate competitors in mining. To take away as far as possible the causes of disputes in new places as regards the boundaries of mining properties, Dr. Gilpin, the Inspector of Mines, proposed that the magnetic east and west be always taken as the base line, and that it be understood by the prospector that by the use of his compass he could lay out his own location and thus know where it would come when regular surveys were made by the department. This proposal has the merit of being easily worked, and would help the prospector to save money in taking up areas to cover his leads. We are glad to say that Dr. Gilpin never advocated the "true meridian" idea, and was not responsible for its being embodied in the Mines Act; and that the government only agreed to adopt the section, when assured by a number of mining operators that the "true meridian" clause was for the interests of the gold miners, and in fact was the wish of mining men generally. We strongly recommend all interested in this matter to do something to keep this matter before the notice of members of the legislature, and have the clause repealed and a section put in the Act that will have in it as much

justice and fairness as possible. We consider that the members of the legislature have all along been remiss in their duty in not posting themselves as to the importance to this province of the successful prosecution of the mining industry, and in husbanding the mineral resources.

SOUTH UNIACKE.—The following record of the yield of one Nova Scotia gold mine during the three years of its operation is proof positive of the value of our gold mines. Its discoverer, Mr. Thompson, was a poor man three years ago, but is now wealthy, and his partner, Mr. Quirk, has also amassed a fortune. He has proved by his acts that Dame Fortune in smiling upon him has rewarded a worthy member of the community, as he has already paid off a large sum in outlawed debts. The average yield of 10½ ounces per ton on all the quartz crushed during the three years proves the phenomenal richness of the lead, which is a small one, the quantity of quartz crushed to date only amounting to 462 tons. The expenses have been kept down to the lowest point, and the profits have consequently been large. It will be noted that for six months during the three years there were no returns, the mill and mine being closed down for repairs or for alterations or for extensions of the workings, and in no month was the mill run for over a few days, the average monthly crushing being only 13 tons:—

Office of Commissioner of Public Works and Mines, Mines Department.

Halifax, N. S., Dec. 21st, 1892.

Memo. showing the amount of quartz crushed and yield of gold from the Thompson Mine, South Uniacke, as per returns from Oct., 1889, to Oct. 31st, 1892, (last returns received,) from the Eastville Mill.

Year.	Month.	Tons of Qtz.	lbs.	Yield of Gold.	dwts.	grs.
1889.	October.....	33	82	2	10	
	November.....	9	19	16	15	
1890.	January.....	7	14	5	0	
	February.....	10	70	19	15	
	April.....	19	189	...	10	
	May.....	12	228	11	0	
	June.....	14	174	9	0	
	July.....	8	162	4	0	
	August.....	4	51	2	0	
	December.....	6	35	18	0	
1891.	January.....	8	50	19	0	
	February.....	4	21	0	0	
	March.....	5	41	0	15	
	April.....	19	276	7	0	
	May.....	10	130	9	0	
	June.....	10	121	15	0	
	July.....	18	226	6	0	
	August.....	20	231	14	0	
	September.....	24	311	2	15	
	October.....	29	404	8	4	
1892.	Nov. and Dec.	29	358	4	12	
	January.....	5	50	0	0	
	March and April....	54	594	10	0	
	May.....	20	209	6	15	
	June and July.....	16	145	4	18	
	August.....	29	317	11	0	
	September.....	20	160	0	0	
	October.....	20	163	14	9	
Total.....		462	4842	1	18	

This is to certify that the within is a correct copy of the mill returns on file at this office.

(Sgd.) E. GILPIN, [Official
D. Com. Dptmt. Mines. Seal.]

CENTRAL RAWDON.—Mr. H. Paw, proprietor of the St. Elmo Hotel, Rockingham, showed us some very rich specimens of gold bearing quartz taken from the property at Central Rawdon, discovered by John Withrow, and in which Mr. Paw has an interest. The leads here cut across the measures and have every appearance of being true fissures. They own a block of 29 areas, and the prospecting so far done proves that they have a most valuable property, the show of gold for the work done being remarkable.

The most cheering news of the holiday season comes from Springhill, where the strike has been settled by wise and mutual concessions on both sides.

JUDGMENT DELIVERED BY HON. MR. JUSTICE RITCHIE, DECEMBER 13th, 1892, IN PALGRAVE MINING COMPANY vs. McMILLAN ET AL

The defendants in this case claim to be the owners in fee simple of the property known as Hurricane Island, in the County of Guysborough, and also hold a lease from the crown of certain mining areas and minerals under water a short distance from the Island.

Some time ago certain third parties who held a lease from the crown of the mining areas and minerals covered by Hurricane Island, sank a shaft on the Island, and excavated a tunnel from it towards the mining areas held by defendants, and the lease of the Hurricane Island areas was afterwards surrendered and a new lease of the same areas and the minerals, gold and silver, within, under and upon the same was granted to the plaintiff company. Both parties claim to own the old shaft and tunnel, the defendants being in