

A CHICKEN THAT CAME HOME TO ROOST.

EXAGGERATION and even positive untruth are by no means unusual in the so-called mining news published in many newspapers. Time and again the *Mining Record* has directed attention to distortions of facts and misstatements made in print relative to mining. It would appear that at least one person who has belittled the efforts of this journal in that direction has discovered that an ugly chicken will sometimes come home to roost.

A press despatch recently sent out from Vancouver was to the effect that a representative of an English syndicate had purchased the West Wellington coal mine, on Vancouver Island, for the sum of \$375,000 and that a company was to be organized with a capital of \$500,000. This story was published in several newspapers, whereupon Wm. Blakemore, who signed his communication in the capacity of "Consulting Engineer to the Company," wrote to the *Colonist* asserting that the report was untrue and that its circulation had already done considerable harm and was calculated to do more. He added: "I should not ask you to publish anything on this subject but for the fact that *nothing so greatly injures mining prospects as the circulation of exaggerated and incorrect statements.*"

While the statement contained in the words we have just now italicised is only in keeping with what the *Mining Record* has for years contended, we call attention to this endorsement of the wisdom of this journal's characteristic and consistent attitude in this matter as having come from a source quite unexpected by us. It is in strong contrast, though, to Mr. Blakemore's earlier attitude, in his paper *The Week*, in a similar connection. We take the following from the *Mining Record* of April, 1906, making only this suggestion—generally there is safety in taking heed to the displays of his "ignorance" by the "novice" who conducts the *Mining Record*: there may not always be in following the sometimes devious courses of certain pretentious experts. The extract mentioned—which includes the criticism of *The Week* and our comment thereon—follows:

"ANTHRACITE GALORE.

"The *B. C. Mining Record's* unreliability was "never better illustrated than when it undertook to "knock" the coal deposits of Queen Charlotte Island on April 28th, and on May 1st it was "announced that the Western Fuel Co., of Nanaimo, had taken an option on one group of claims for the substantial figure of \$700,000. "This comes of entrusting the conduct of a mining "journal to a novice, who is either unscrupulous "or ignorant, or both."

Now, apart from quoting three lines referring to the Graham Island coal from an article contributed by Mr. Blakemore in October, 1904, to *The Engineering and Mining Journal* of New York, the only reference we then made to "the coal deposits of

Queen Charlotte Island" was contained in the following: "But then, in 1904 it suited him (Blakemore) to 'boost' undeveloped coal measures on one of the Queen Charlotte Islands and depreciate the productive coal mines of Vancouver Island." We now ask: Were not the coal measures of the Queen Charlotte Islands correctly described as "undeveloped?" Undoubtedly they were, as is well and widely known.

Further—on Sunday, April 29, the *Nanaimo Herald* reprinted, under the caption: "IF IT WERE ONLY TRUE WHAT A STORY IT WOULD BE," an article to which it referred as follows: "Appended is an article that appeared in the *Vancouver World* on Friday last, on the front page of that truthful (!) journal, under head lines stretched across three columns, thus:

"ANTHRACITE FOUND IN QUEEN CHARLOTTE IS.

"Western Fuel Co., of Nanaimo, Secures Claims "for \$700,000—General Manager to go North to "Initiate Development Work."

Then followed the article, which was simply a "fairy" tale, as was conclusively shown in the *Herald's* closing paragraph: "Superintendent Stockett, of the Western Fuel Co., on being shown the article by the *Herald* last evening said: 'It reads well, but there is not a shadow of truth in the story. The party who wrote it must possess a very vivid imagination.'"

It is relevant now to add that although more than a year has passed, nothing has since been heard of "the substantial figure of \$700,000" nor the development work that was to be done.

A Boston journal's comment on the management of the Granby Consolidated Mining, Smelting, and Power Company is to the effect that during the past year ended June 30, last, the company has accomplished two things in particular which are bound to result beneficially to stockholders: closed negotiations whereby the West Kootenay Power and Light Company furnishes it additional electric power, and acquired a financial interest in the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company, which insures a full supply of fuel. The unfavourable features of the annual report are the higher costs of mining and smelting, but, taking into consideration the fuel difficulty and the higher costs of labour, the company did remarkably well, showing net profits for the year, on a considerably smaller production, of \$1,848,019, against \$1,823,617 in the previous year. From the year's operations share earnings of \$13.68 resulted, while stockholders were paid \$12 in dividends. The balance-sheet for the past fiscal year shows cash and copper on hand on June 30, 1907, amounting to \$853,280, against \$1,023,834 on the preceding corresponding date. The stocks, bonds and bills receivable item increased from \$45,429 in 1906 to \$895,675 this year. If the management finally decides, as intimated in the annual report, to issue \$1,500,000 new stock, it will bring the total outstanding stock up to the full authorized amount of \$15,000,000.