

during the week, and an upraise from the end thereof 20 ft., connecting it with the stope in the bottom of the 3rd level, the ore found in this cross-cut, and reported in my last as being the full size of the drift, proved to be very low grade and almost worthless; at a point 10 ft. above the cross-cut fair grade ore was encountered, which is making down in advance of the cross-cut. The stopes above the 3rd level are nearly exhausted. The south orebody at the end of the 1st level is considerably smaller than it has been, but it has the appearance of opening out again, its present size is about 8 ft. by 10 ft. Have shipped 117 tons ore this week and have 25 men at work. Lord Byron: The cross-cut from the end of the tunnel is in very hard rock; progress this week, 4 ft.; total 429 ft.

— (11th Dec.)—Copy of telegram received from Eureka to-day:—“83 tons ore shipped, 98 tons ore smelted, realising nett 1,300 dols.”

**SIERRA BUTTES GOLD.**—Sierra Buttes mine: Total receipts, 17,792 dols.; total working expenses, 14,011 dols., and 2,509 dols. spent on 9th level, and 10,363 dols. spent on new mill. Plumas Eureka mine: Total receipts, 36,066 dols.; total working expenses, 21,313 dols.

**ST. JOHN DEL REY.**—The directors have received the following telegram from Morro Velho, dated Rio de Janeiro, 11th December:—“Produce for November, 18,000 oitavas, value 6,976*l*. Yield, 3.1 oitavas per ton. Cuiabá: 1,350 tons stamped. Yield, 1.4 oitavas per ton.”

### CORRESPONDENCE.

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for the Opinions or Statements of our Correspondents.]

#### MINING ON THE GOLD COAST.

To the Editor of the “MINING WORLD AND ENGINEERING RECORD.”

SIR.—Many thanks for inserting my last—an encouragement to trouble you again. The last circular of the Guinea Coast Gold Mining Company, Limited, somewhat puzzled me by speaking of the ground passed through during August month, and Mr. Secretary Dakin was kind enough to explain as follows:—“The samples to which you refer did not consist of rock, but resembled Fuller’s earth, partially clotted, and of a blue colour, very soft, and showing a few small pieces of rock mixed with it. There is a large quantity of this stuff, and our head miner, who lately came home, reported it as so easy to work that one man, with pick and shovel, would do as much work in a single day as ten men using explosives could do elsewhere.” Now as this blue clay, which is probably the yellow clay coloured by manganese, produces from 3 to 9 ozs. of gold, not to speak of silver, and evidently can be water-worked, I claim another triumph for “hydraulicking.”

A friend was kind enough to send me the *Westminster Review* (No. 128), containing an article on “Goldfields: Ancient and Modern.” It has not the strength which we expect from the old *Review*; it contains not a few mistakes; and, like most *réchauffés* of our modern day, it is a *Tendens* affair—a sign-post pointing to the Transvaal goldfields. As many will read it, I ask permission to make a few remarks upon this article.

My belief is that gold was the first metal worked by man; that the workings began in the Nile Valley, and that Egypt spread the metallic arts, and the forms of art, over the then civilised world to Ireland, its edge. The Irish legends (p. 380) point to “Defrobani,” supposed to be where Constantinople now is, and are comparatively modern. The wells of Pharaoh, Seti I., between the Nile Valley and the Red Sea (p. 385) were “theoretically discovered” by Brugsch Pasha through hieroglyphic inscriptions, which Ismail Khedive had despised and derided. When noticing (p. 387) the gold-finding ants of Pliny, “not so large as a dog,” the reviewer should have referred to the “Pippilika”—gold and the jackal. The “golden fleece” is still extensively used, not only “in some part of South America” (p. 389); and our blankets are its legitimate descendants.

We now enter upon a very disputed subject—Ophir, Sofala, the Zimbulye Ruins, and certain Kafir customs “so puzzling to anthropologists.” Dr. Aloys Sprenger, the highest living authority on the palæo-geography of Arabia, locates Ophir on the coast of the Province El Asir, lying south of the Hijaz, and the prolongation of the Midian Mountains would supply its gold. As regards the Sofalan, and other ruins, I have shown that the Zanzibar Coast contains remains of ancient cities whose very names are forgotten; that descendants of Persians are still found on shoreland and island, and that one of the voyages of “Sinbad the Sailor” proves intimate acquaintance with East Africa—the “bird roo” having been rediscovered only lately. But a man who writes fifty volumes cannot expect to be read. All he may hope is that at some future time his positive additions to world-knowledge will be picked out and preserved when the rest goes to the trunkmaker. My conclusion is that in times, of which history is silent, Persians and Arabs colonised the whole of this coast; built these exceptional ruins, and left not only “various customs,” but blood descendants amongst the so-called “Kafirs;” nor is it impossible that this may date from the reigns of the Ptolemies.

I cannot but deny the statement (p. 392) concerning Portuguese maps, “showing plainly that the sources of the Nile had been well ascertained by them.” These early explorers vitiated the good geography of Ptolemy, and they introduced the “great central sea” we have had so much trouble to abolish. “General Shutter” (a German) should have been explained as Capt. Sutter, a Swiss. He lately died in poverty, apparently the fate of those who open gold regions for the world. Of course I have a quarrel with the assertions in p. 404: the “unhealthy swamp-belt” on the Gold Coast abounds in hillocks, which are comparatively sanitaria; and I am tired of explaining how Capt. Cameron and myself were compelled, by the condition of things, to be “prostrated by fever.” Much more might have been said (p. 404) about “gold remaining the standard of value.” In the same number (p. 547) we are assured that the “gold sovereign is at present worth 15 to 20 per cent. more than the market value of the silver pound;” and the probability of a gold famine is worth while noting. Again, was the first money “coined in the reign of Darius?” Certainly tradition says otherwise. On the other hand, the writer and I perfectly agree about the *paucæ sapientia*, which risks New Guinea falling into “other hands.” And the worst is that “other hands” work better than ours. The cry is now loud against the French; I only wish they held the Gold Coast for a year or two. The same may be said of Italy, who is developing, in a marvellous way, East African possessions, which we have persistently looked upon as perfectly worthless. But this is a long subject, and I must ask your permission some day to show what France and Italy would do upon the Guinea Gulf if it were theirs.—I am, &c.,

RICHARD F. BURTON.

### THE NACUPAI GOLD MINING CO. AND THE CHILE GOLD MINING CO.

To John Harvey, Esq., Chairman of the Chile Gold Mining Company, Limited.

SIR,—As I am particularly referred to in the circular issued by you to the shareholders of the Chile Gold Mining Company, Limited, on the 23rd November last, you will permit me to make a few observations on those paragraphs which purport to be a reply to the charges made by me at the meeting of the Nacupai Gold Mining Company, Limited, held on the 6th of November.

These charges were couched in the following terms:—

That Mr. Nicholson, the manager of the Chile Company, had unjustly and illegally invaded one of the concessions of the Nacupai Company, called Austin No. 9, and which is contiguous to the Chile ground; that Mr. Nicholson is extracting large quantities of ore and gold therefrom, and that this invasion was based on certain sham rights created by Mr. Nicholson, one of them being that the No. 9 Concession came under the category of lapsed concessions, comprised in a decree granted to General Pulgar, the other being a pretended purchase of the concession at a nominal price from a Mr. Snell, who was previously declared by the Courts to have no rights in the property.

To these specific charges your circular to your shareholders gives a very ambiguous reply.

I will quote from paragraph 2:—“You say that ‘the Concession Austin No. 9 has been acquired by purchase, and the legitimate owner’s title to same,’ &c., but you do not say that the alleged legitimate owner was Mr. Snell.”

Are your shareholders aware that this so-called legitimate owner and his title was condemned by the Supreme Court of Guayana in 1881, and that the original buyers of the property, from whom we hold our titles, were then confirmed in possession, your vendor, Snell, being left with right of appeal, but of which he never availed himself, thus recognising that he had no right in the property which he could successfully vindicate?

And now he had recourse to the same trick, by entering into a contract of sale of the same pretended rights to Mr. Nicholson, the character of which may be judged by the fact that the sale price of so valuable a property is to be 1,000*l*., if Mr. Nicholson be left in quiet possession for a year.

It is true, I believe, that Mr. Nicholson obtained judgments in his favour by the provincial judge at Guacipati, but the judge who gave these judgments, and made the so-called Judicial Decree of possession, was immediately recalled by the Government, and the present judge, who was sent from Caracas specially to enquire under what circumstances such decree was made, shortly after his arrival, issued a warrant for the arrest or detention of your manager, Mr. Nicholson.

The decree of possession thus obtained has no weight whatever, beyond enabling Mr. Nicholson to continue his spoliation of the property we have purchased, and thus increase our claim against the Chile Company on the final adjudication.

You will excuse me if I say that the statement—“Should further litigation be resorted to by the Nacupai,” is misleading.

You must be aware that the litigation between our company and yours commenced some months ago, and has been proceeding ever since; and will be continued until we obtain our rights.

I may make the same remark with regard to the question of bail.

It is incorrect to state that “the bail has been shielved.”

The shareholders of the Nacupai Company were informed at the statutory meeting that the bail offered by Mr. Nicholson was refused, and this statement is strictly correct.

What happened was this—

After the judge issued a warrant for the arrest or detention of Nicholson, our counsel endeavoured to obtain ample security by responsible bondsmen, and an injunction against your manager working Concession No. 9. Security was offered by Mr. Nicholson, but the persons tendered at Guacipati, as guarantors, were not acceptable, and were refused by the Governor, but the prohibition of leaving the country was maintained.

The injunction against working Concession No. 9 was in abeyance when the Courts rose for their vacation in August last, but this in no way affects the detention of Mr. Nicholson who, up to latest dates, could not have quitted the territory.

Mr. Nicholson states that, had he given bail, he would have recognised the position of the appellants. Our company’s case against the Chile Company proceeds, whether satisfactory bail is forthcoming or not.

As a matter of fact, no serious defence has been offered to the company’s action on the merits, but only on side issues of a purely formal character, such as the point of law above indicated, viz:—

That for certain alleged informalities in registration the claimants (our company) had no status to appear before the Courts.

These are “the points raised” in which Mr. Nicholson boasts to have scored successes against us. It seems, therefore, hardly fair to throw the whole responsibility of the present phase of the proceedings on the Venezuelan judges.

When you pass into the field of supposition you necessarily become more indefinite.

You say, hypothetically, that the Nacupai Company may be claiming under a title from a vendor who had no sufficient or legal title to convey.

Now, Concession No. 9 is one out of ten concessions numbered 1 to 10 inclusive, originally granted to Mr. Austin, the United States Consul in the district. All the ten concessions were transferred by Mr. Austin to the late Orinoco Company, and, by the liquidation of that company, to our vendors.

How is it, then, that Concession No. 9, which unfortunately happens to be contiguous to the Chile mine, was just the one whose title was imperfect, and liable to impeachment?

The properties are regularly registered in the names of our trustees. We have regularly paid to Government the regular mining dues, and hold the receipts, the last being that of 21st October—the best evidence of legitimate ownership!

Did Mr. Nicholson ever pay the dues on No. 9? You doubtless know that he tried to do so and was refused.