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Southern Ontario Capital Missing Big Chance in North

Writer Scores "Smug Indifference of our Supposed Business Leaders" towards the Wealth of the North. Twice as Many Failures in Other Lines as in Gold Mines Investments. Average Return of Gold Mines, 182 per cent. A Letter from an Old-timer.

Some days ago there was a remarkable letter published in the Toronto Mail and Empire. The letter was remarkable not only for the facts it gave about the North Land and its resources, but still more for the suggestions made as to the chances for wealth here to those who are willing to assist in the development of the mining industry of this country. The "smug indifference" of the business men of the South is justly scored. It is a pity that a letter similar to this should not appear in every paper every day until the men of the South woke up to the opportunities they are missing. Most of these same business men are ready to take a flyer in oil, or automobile stock, or Florida lands. They are on, perhaps, a dozen "sucker" lists, but the mining industry having no "sucker" list, misses them. But let the letter as it appeared in The Mail and Empire speak for itself:

To the Editor of The Mail and Empire:

Sir,—Regarding your magnificent editorial of the 12th inst., on Northern Ontario, which Mr. Dobie acknowledged so gracefully on behalf of the old-timers of the North, I would merely add that in my humble opinion this editorial has accomplished more good towards creating interest among the general public than all the news items on the financial pages attained this year.

I get positively nauseated at the smug indifference of our supposed business leaders towards any mention of the tremendous wealth of our God-given heritage. The Department of Mines pictures of Northern Ontario gold fields were shown here the other night, and I heard substantial and respected business men say with evident self-satisfaction that they "wouldn't cross the street to see such bunk."

What is the explanation, Mr. Editor, of such appalling ignorance and mulish stupidity? Are the "leading business men" of Ontario so blinded in self-conceit, in pious intolerance, that they deliberately spurn what is actually the richest gift ever bestowed on any country by the Creator?

This attitude on the part of our supposedly intelligent class is invariably the rule throughout older Ontario. Now, Sir, I would very respectfully suggest that the wonderful news stories which have lately come down from the North regarding the new strike in Gillies Limits, the tremendous development on the Horne, etc., should be blazed across the front pages of our great dailies instead of being buried among stock quotations on the financial pages.

What news could possibly be more interesting or more important to us? As you very truly say, "our people must turn their attention to it and make it one of the wonders of the productive industry of the second quarter of the twentieth century."

You speak of the possibilities of Bessemer iron ore being found in great quantities in this country. I would state that there is unquestionably a deposit of that very thing not far from the Transcontinental about one hundred miles west of Cochrane, great in extent and unequalled in grade.

I was given samples by Indians at Cochrane fifteen years ago, which I had assayed by Johns, of Liskeard, and his report was that the ore was perfect grade. These Indians were secretive as is their nature, but all

stated that there was an immense deposit in the locality I spoke of. I didn't bother trying to obtain their confidences, as I was leaving for the East, but an engineer in the employ of the Dominion Bridge Company, who knew the Indians, assured me that he was satisfied they were telling the truth. It is there at right bound to be anyway in that formation.

When mention is made of the larger mines which have been properly and energetically developed, such as the mighty Hollinger, the statement of the great engineer, P. A. Robbins, should be repeated until everyone has grasped its tremendous significance: "There are hundreds of Hollingers in this country," "the surface of this great Pre-Cambrian Shield has only been scratched." Mr. Robbins should know whereof he speaks—former assistant general manager of the Consolidated on the Rand.

As you very truly say, Hon. Mr. McCrea's trip to England should be repeated as often as possible, but to depend on English capital to develop our gold fields would be childishness. We must develop and prove them up ourselves.—We in Ontario who have money and who have ordinary horse-sense enough to be able to look up the records and bonafides of the people behind the various developments.

Bradstreet's records show twice as many failures among all other lines of business as in gold mine investments on this continent.

Government statistics show an average of 182 per cent. general average return on gold mine investments as compared with 14 per cent. in manufacturing; 3 per cent. in railroads, and 6 per cent. in banks.

Two of the greatest Canadians who ever lived, Sir John A. McDonald and Sir Charles Tupper, tried desperately to interest British capital and the British Government in the exploitation of the Sudbury nickel field in 1888, as can be seen by reference to the correspondence shown in the 1905 report of the Ontario Bureau of Mines, available in any public library. We see that they had no success even when the great steel men of Europe and England admitted to Tupper that the extra-Canada supply of nickel couldn't begin to meet their requirements for nickel-steel.

No, to depend on getting English capital to develop the Ontario gold fields is asinine childishness in view of the heart-breaking failure to interest them in the exploitation of Canada's nickel to the interest of Canada and the Empire.

Lastly, that very fine pamphlet, "Mines and Mineral Resources," prepared by the Department of Mines for Wembley Exhibition should go out to every home in Ontario. It is a splendid book, written in a most interesting style, and the information it contains would read like the Arabian Nights to the majority of Ontarians. How many have the faintest idea that 719 millions have already been produced in Northern Ontario in gold, silver, nickel, copper, iron, cobalt and other metals?

This has run to greater length than I intended so I suppose it would encroach too much on your valuable space, but I will be satisfied that you have read my appreciation of your splendid work.

Yours, etc.,
CANADIAN.

Grimsby, Dec. 13.

Foreman: Hey, don't spit on the floor!
New Man: S'matter: floor leak?

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