

Zeerust Mafeking.

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Mr. W. E. Bleloch has returned to South Africa. Speaking at a complimentary luncheon given to him in London prior to his departure about a month ago, he said he had done what he could to advance mining in South Africa, and although he had been regarded as something of a stormy petrel in regard to the geology of the Rand and had occasionally to express opinions which were at variance with orthodox opinion, it looked to-day as if there might be a considerable change in attitude as to the views he had put forward. To-day it seemed certain, owing to recent events on the Far East Rand, and especially the striking of the reef in the West Springs Mine, south of the Apex fault, that the southern area of the Far East Rand would become another of the great main reef goldfields of South Africa. His reading did not do any damage to any company or any property. With regard to the Sub Nigel, he claimed that the Nigel reef, which had turned out so rich, with extraordinary shoots going down to the lowest depths and producing £800,000 a year in profit, was a separate reef, and that the Sub Nigel property was intact so far as the main reef was concerned in the whole of its area. If that proved to be correct, and he believed it would be, then the Sub Nigel would be worth double what it was to-day, and it would extend the life of the Rand goldfield by another 20 or 30 years. During the past year he had endeavoured to interest his financial friends, some of whom were in the room, in another enterprise to the east of the Far East Rand—an area where there were definite evidences of the extension of the Witwatersrand, which was now covered by the coal measures of that area. There were three seams of coal there, and below that there were sub-outcrops of the Witwatersrand beds. It was only a matter of systematic prospecting and surveying, such as was now being done by the Consolidated Gold Fields, which would, in his opinion, locate another and quite independent area carrying the blanket reefs of the Rand. He wished the Consolidated Gold Fields every success in their enterprise with West Witwatersrand. He had no doubt whatever they would succeed because they were going on sound scientific lines in following the geological indications obtained through the geophysical exploration.

On the Bechuanaland Border

Continuing, Mr. Bleloch made an interesting statement regarding the only important financial transaction he had so far carried through in the City of London, namely, the reorganisation of the Houtpoort and the Burbank companies into one concern called the Houtpoort-Burbank Goldfields, Ltd. This company controlled an area in the western Transvaal 200 miles west of the Rand and on the border of Bechuanaland. In that area there had been found very definite indications of an extraordinarily rich blanket reef. He had seen pieces of the blanket reef himself, and the pebbles were literally surrounded by gold, the assays being from 70 to 75 ozs. to the ton. He wished it to be understood that they had not located that reef in situ yet, but the indications of it were very strong, and any day they might get news in regard to it. In one hole they put down they got five pieces of gold out of two loads of stuff, and in addition there were three diamonds. That might become a very profitable enterprise to those who were risking their money in it, and after all, they were not risking very much. He believed it was the first time that a mining share had been put out in the City of London at the small price of 3d. Anyhow, the shareholders who ventured their money to that extent had the consolation of knowing that more than half of the total capital would be cash, which would be used to open up this reef, which might yield very large profits. He had seen that happen before in South Africa.

"One of the World's Best Gambles"

Major Trevor, A.S.M., a former inspector of mines in the Transvaal, said they were glad to have the opportunity of saying "good-bye" to one of the pioneers of the gold industry in South Africa on his return to that country. Mr. Bleloch had never funk'd a chance; he had taken every chance in a sporting manner, and many of them had turned out trumps. They all hoped that the two which he had mentioned would turn out trumps. With regard to one of them—that in the Far East Rand—he claimed to have certain prior knowledge even to Mr. Bleloch, because somewhere about the year 1891 he was travelling in the Vryheid district with the late Mr. David Draper, and they had specimens from it of bona fide gold-bearing blanket. Some of these specimens carried very high values. He believed there was good evidence that the main reef existed in this property, and if they sank there was a very good chance of striking something rich. Mining was always a gamble, but he believed this was one of the best gambles in the world.

MARICO GOLD FIELD

INCREASING ACTIVITY REPORTED

More Quarterly Reports

FOUR CORNER HOUSE COMPANIES

RDM

25 July 1933

By THE MINING EDITOR

Among the outlying districts which are receiving renewed attention lately from a gold-mining point of view is that of Marico, in the Western Transvaal, a correspondent states. On the farm Windheuvel, near Ottoshoop, a large number of claims have been pegged, and on one block a five-stamp mill is crushing with, it is reported, excellent results. From some adjoining claims ore is being carted by wagon to a battery some distance away for crushing, and is said to be giving a return of $2\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. to the ton. Other farms in the district have been taken up under option, or have been extensively pegged, and it is expected that very shortly there will be great activity all round, as several companies are now in course of flotation. Many well-known engineers have reported favourably on different properties in the district and all are sanguine of success. The assays of samples taken have all shown encouraging results. One lot of 30 samples shows an average of $11\frac{1}{2}$ dwts. over 43 inches. The reefs vary in width from three feet up to 18 feet. In view of the bad times which the farmers have experienced, it is hoped that these activities will lead to employment being given to many who at present are near the starvation point. Native labour is plentiful and cheap and working costs should be very low.

GOLD CLAIMS IN *sta* ZEERUST AREA

18-7-33 GOOD PROGRESS REPORTED

Notwithstanding the distress in the Marico district many believe that better times are coming soon, writes our Zeerust correspondent.

The building of a new dam, which may cost £40,000, about four miles west of Zeerust, will begin before the end of August. The Zeerust Village Council, the Chamber of Commerce, and others, have requested that those who have been longest out of employment shall be first engaged, and suggested that they should be chosen from the local unemployed. The member of Parliament for the district has been strongly urged to use his influence in this direction.

Remarkable results from gold mining are expected soon. In one place a five-stamp battery is working. The gold is conveyed weekly to Lichtenburg, and the returns are said to be very satisfactory.

At another spot on the same farm Windheuvel, work is now being done 80 feet down. The quartz is crushed at the homestead and the results are said to be exceptionally good.

Two companies will start work within a few weeks. The number of claims pegged is already considerable. Options have been obtained on farms from Bokkraal, near Koster, to the borders of the Moiloa native reserve, a few miles north-west of Zeerust. It is expected that by the end of the year there will be a vast amount of work in progress.

