

Abra Mine Properties

Through the courtesy of ex-Governor Francis Burton Harrison we are able to publish the accompanying map of the mining district of Abra, capital, Bangued. There is a great deal of interest in the district, and as we have informed our readers from time to time, much difference of opinion about it. If we can obtain access, for publication, to what the new society of Philippine geologists has to say about it, we shall publish it with dispatch for the benefit of readers who may have invested in this region or may be contemplating such investments.

With the information actually at hand, chiefly from R. Y. Hanlon of R. Y. Hanlon & Co., consulting engineers and geologists, the Abra district is not a very promising mining district. This is supported by Benguet Consolidated's abandonment of further work on the Abra Mining property. While gold will be on one property and not on another nearby, in December Mr. Hanlon reported entirely negatively on the Cordillera property north of Abra Mining and the company cancelled its contracts with the Cordillera company, the majority of whose directors insisted upon going ahead.

Rich stringers are found throughout much of this district, which seems to be very deceiving—at least superficially. There is encouragement in assays from stringers to go on, despite the pessimism of many engineers; we understand that Abra Mining has not abandoned hope in its claims even after Benguet Consolidated's experience there.

It was our conjecture at one time, not altogether abandoned yet, that small mills of 10 to 20 tons' capacity could operate profitably in this region at many points. But where are they, after all this lapse of time since 1933 and the reports that then sent Abra Mining stock so high?

One thing we know from sad personal experience. It is this: there is a great deal of outright racketeering in claims located in this district. There is also a great deal of genuine enthusiasm amounting in the end to the same thing. Aggressive groups of Abra folk throw property after property together; the claims that have been taken up seem all but innumerable.

Under these conditions there is likely to be over-capitalization of associations and companies; and if it turns out here and there that small mills can be operated, after much expensive exploration and development in hope of finding ore sufficient for larger mills, probably only small returns can be earned on the total capital. So that the more prudent way of venturing in the Abra district would be with limited outlay of funds with the primary intention of operating a pilot mill—in the hope of something better.

The district is the most persistent
(Please turn to page 43)

APPROXIMATE LOCATIONS OF MINERAL GROUPS IN THE PROVINCE OF ABRA

SCALE 1:50,000



The New Engineer

(Continued from page 34)

when suckling their young. They have no real love for the color, or odor, of an Americano, and in general they deserve a reasonably wide berth.

Jungle reptiles such as the several species of cobra, pythons, and other snakes throughout the archipelago, are a source of extreme danger. The python, while not venomous, does not hesitate to strike man from ambush with such force as to knock the victim down—and usually out—as a prelude to a few constricting wraps and a meal. Cobras, and other venomous snakes, strike both from the ground and out of overhanging vegetation. One also must use caution in stepping over fallen and decaying logs.

The usual procedure applies for snake bites—cutting open the wound, applying tourniquets, free bleeding, and the injection of permanganate of potash solution. A king cobra bite leaves little hope for the victim; therefore caution is more to be indicated than remedial measures.

Crocodiles infest the rivers of Mindanao, and to some extent elsewhere in the islands. An unknown toll is taken by them of native children, and once they have an appetite for human flesh they become increasingly bold, even though they rarely attack unless with an advantage. Due care must be taken when on river travel, or in traversing swampy places. They drag their victim beneath the water and bury him in the mud, meantime weeping copious tears over the plight of the late lamented. I once criticized the lack of life preservers for an

Asiga River—Lake Mainit launch, and the only satisfaction derived was, "Sir, the life preservers are total useless because of the many crocodiles when you will want to swim."

I could recount unbelievable stories about leech bites, ulcers, and itch; Hongkong foot and the like, and I could fill a page with an outline of remedies, and preventatives for the above—many of which have been gleaned from well-meaning, but otherwise inexperienced individuals with brilliant ideas.

The Southern Island jungle trails should be traveled with close attention to batik signs indicating that a "run" leaving the trail has a set wild boar trap; which, if sprung, may shatter one's legs, or even kill him. Fortunately one early learns to recognize these signs.

The foregoing is not the discourse of a soured engineer. It is more a disclosure concerning a few things learned by experience, and somewhat avoidable with due care. I should be glad if the information, or any part of it, becomes of value to the newly arrived engineer undertaking, particularly the opening up of our unexplored, or otherwise remote, mineral areas. The Philippines are most importantly coming into outstanding mining prominence, with which many of the engineers now here, as also those to come, will be successfully identified. The Islands are a paradise when looked upon in the proper attitude. We have the unquestioned mineral resources, and there is every opportunity here for the ethical engineer who can exercise tact, take care of his health, and stick with the ship until he has survived some of the discouraging features which seem never to end, but toward which there gradually develops a sort of beneficent callousness.

Abra Mining . . .

(Continued from page 24)

conundrum in the Philippine mining field. The situation is extremely complicated, as we have indicated, by the aggressiveness of folk of the region in taking advantage of the eagerness of the

public to risk funds in mining. Igorots are said to be the cleverest folk in the Islands at selling claims, but we would rate the folk of Abra as at least second. As in all districts, it would be best to go by the men back of the project rather

than by what is said of the project itself. Certainly the claims-peddlers of Abra are dragging ten pesos out of Manila to every one taken out by Igorots. That they have been working to great purpose.

A. SORIANO Y CIA.

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