

SOME IDAHO MINES.

THE mining outlook in Boise county is brighter this year than it has been for several years past. The placer mines, although growing gradually less in importance, are still a source of considerable revenue. For the past three or four years the seasons have been unusually dry, and many claims that would have yielded well and given employment to a considerable number of men did not work. This year, however, the mountains being covered with an unusual depth of very heavy snow, work will go on in every placer claim in the county. Among the most extensive which are worked by hydraulic chiefs may be mentioned those of W. B. Noble, at Grimes's pass, at the head of Grimes's creek; Ben Wilson, at Pioneer ville; S. J. Dempsey, at Centerville; K. P. Plowman, Chas. Mann, Brochmiller & Co., Barker & Hall, and John Riordan & Co., on More and Elk creeks, in the vicinity of Idaho City. Some of the ditches are already in readiness and water turned on.

Although the placer mines turn out a large quantity of gold dust every year, we look to the quartz as our main support. Early in the sixties many quartz veins that have developed into great mines were located and abandoned. For many years thereafter everybody depended upon the placers; but it was plain to be seen that their extent was year after year growing a good deal less, and that quartz mines must be opened and worked or business of every kind would suffer. "Necessity is the mother of invention" could easily be construed to express the situation. Placer miners who saw that their claims were getting smaller and poorer every year commenced prospecting for quartz, which they worked on when there was no water for their placer ground. In this they have been successful, a large number of splendid properties resulting from their labors. I will give a few notes on some of the principal ones in evidence to show that we have great gold and silver quartz belts, which, when developed and worked with sufficient capital, will place Boise county in the lead of any section in the great northwest as a producer of the two most precious metals.

The largest mill in Boise county is the Gold Hill, at Quartzburg, in the west side of Boise basin. It drops twenty-five stamps day and night, the year round, on ore from the Pioneer mine. From forty to fifty tons are crushed every twenty-four hours, and the monthly yield is from \$20,000 to \$25,000. This mill commenced crushing ore from the Gold Hill mine in 1870. Work on that vein ceased about two years ago, since which time the mill has run on Pioneer ore without interruption. This is one of the largest gold mines in Idaho, the average width being thirty feet of a mixture of quartz and porphyry. No sorting is done, as all of the ledge matter is put through the mill at less expense. The owners of this property value it at \$250,000.

A little farther up the gulch is the Iowa mill, which has lain idle for a good many years. The Iowa mine, for which it was erected, was exceedingly rich on the surface, but when the chute was lost the owners could not carry on prospecting, being men of limited means. The general impression is that the mine is a good one, and, like many other practically abandoned claims, will commence production again soon.

East of the Gold Hill is the Ohio mine, owned by a Boston company, represented by Captain W. I. Smart, who had a quantity of the ore worked last fall to prove its value by mill test. The returns were good in free gold—\$20 per ton. The vein is six feet wide, and the ore the same all through. A twenty-five-stamp mill will be erected on it this year.

Besides these may be mentioned the Ebenezer and Bolshar-

zer, a few miles west of the Gold Hill. They are splendid mines, and owned by W. A. Coughanour, of the Gold Hill company, who has offered them for sale. In that section many other very promising locations are under course of development.

At Pioneer ville, on the northern rim of Boise basin, are several mines that have been worked and paid well, but are now, from some cause unknown to me, idle. There are three mills on the flat—two ten and one eight-stamp.

Lower down, on Elk creek, fourteen miles north of Idaho City, is the Elkhorn, which was purchased by a Boston company on February 1 last. Late developments have revealed two or three more ore bodies in the lower workings, and the company have concluded to put in twenty more stamps, which will make the mill a twenty-five stamp.

Near the Elkhorn the Revenue and three other mines, owned by a Boston company, will be thoroughly opened by a large force, which will be put on as soon as the roads are open, so that teams can take in supplies.

Six or seven miles below these John Pharris and U. F. Linville are developing the Snow Bird, which was discovered by the latter last fall. A shaft has been sunk to the depth of thirty-five feet, and in going down the width of the vein increased from one to six inches of free milling gold ore worth from \$125 to \$150 per ton. The walls are separated by two feet of ledge matter, which they expect is filled with ore at the depth of fifty feet, to which point the shaft will be sunk as rapidly as possible.

West of the Snow Bird a "tenderfoot" from Boston, Mr. Norcross, discovered a splendid gold mine last year. A crushing of the ore was made in the Deer creek mill, and paid a good profit. A letter received a few days ago from the discoverer says that he has organized a company and incorporated with a capital stock of \$100,000. Extensive development work will commence as soon as supplies can be taken to it.

The Moriarty Brothers are developing a good mine (a continuation of the Forest King west) between Elk creek and the Washington mine. They have a five-stamp mill at the Forest King, to which it will be but a short distance to haul the ore. The mill is the property of the Moriarty Brothers and James Carley and John Riordan.

Ten men are developing the Washington. A ten-stamp mill was erected at this mine last year by Charles Ballbach, of Omaha, and John Reagan and Joseph Voshay, of Idaho City. It will resume crushing in a few weeks, with the ore house full of very rich rock and an abundance more in sight in the mine.

At Banner, twenty-eight miles northeast of Idaho City, work is pushing ahead in the Wolverine and Crown Point mines, on the 500 foot level. These locations are on the same vein, which is from three to seven feet wide of ore that is all milled without any sorting. Last year 7,000 tons reduced produced over \$300,000, an average of \$100, which is very high. Besides this, twenty tons from the 500 foot level of the Banner yielded 515 ounces silver per ton. These properties, owned by the Elmira company, are held at the price of \$1,000,000. A large force of men has been cutting wood all winter, and it is expected that when crushing is again resumed the twenty-stamp mill will not be obliged to shut down again very soon on account of lack of fuel. During the past ten years the mill has run during the summer months, and the yield has always been large. There is some talk that the company will erect a fifty-stamp mill this year, as the mines can easily keep one of that size running the year round.

Nothing is doing at Graham, but a letter from London says that in July work will commence on a long tunnel to develop the Julia and Cleveland mines. It is to be large enough for