

**PLACER GOLD MINING.**

**How It Is Conducted on the Bars of Snake River.**

A correspondent of the San Francisco Mining and Scientific Press, contributes the following interesting description of his investigation of mine operations on Snake river:

Having just returned from a trip up Snake river, perhaps some of the items of information gathered in regard to the fine gold placers of that section may be of interest to your readers.

We stopped off at Ontario, a small but thriving town on the Oregon side in Malheur county. Situated as it is in a valley about ten miles wide, much of the surface as level as a floor, it seems a most unlikely place in which to find gold, nevertheless it is there, distributed up and down the valley for hundreds of miles; though as Missouri Jake used to say, "it is more than half gravel." In some places the miner or prospector in search of a "grub stake," may rock out from \$1 to \$3 per day. These pay streaks are usually found about the upper ends of the islands and the bends of the river. In some places bars several hundred feet from the river are stripped and the pay gravel hauled to the river and washed. The overlay is a sandy loam, generally about 5 or 6 feet deep, and produces good crops of hay, grain and potatoes, with irrigation. When crops are harvested, many of the farmers along the river mining, gathering gold beneath the same ground from which they have taken a crop of potatoes a few weeks before. The plant most generally for washing the gravel, consists in part of a horse-power Chinese pump, from which the water is lead to a shallow box about three feet square, the sheet iron bottom of which is perforated with about one-quarter inch holes. These serve to distribute the water over a finer screen placed at an incline of about 35 degrees.

The holes in this incline screen are about one-sixteenth of an inch in diameter, about sixteen to each square inch, over this screen the gravel slides, being assisted by the water falling over it from the screen above, which washes the fine sand and gold through it, whence it falls from 2 to 5 inches upon an amalgamator or silver plated copper table, set on inclination of about 2 inches to a foot. Upon these tables the greater part of the free gold is caught; the tailing being run thro' a blanket or burly sluice to save what may have escaped. Some dispense with the Chinese pump by bringing in water from the irrigation ditches, thus cutting down expenses considerably. It is a cheap and simple device and when not overcharged saves the gold quite effectively. Its capacity is from fifteen to twenty cubic yards per ten hours. There have been numerous attempts made to winze gravel from the bottom of the river by means of hydraulic dredges, but, so far, these experiments seem to have resulted in failure, as the mill and dismantled boats and scows tied up along the river will testify. We noticed a rocker being industriously worked almost under the stern of one of these machine boats which it is reported had cost \$25,000. It secured a sarcastic rebuke to some one's mistake and misman-

agement. Those who stick to the banks and bars seem to be meeting with encouraging results and are in a fair way to solve the problem of working the pay gravel upon a large scale. We went up the river about fifteen miles above Ontario, and found considerable work going on with the machine above described. We regretted that limited time would not admit of our going farther, as we were informed a Mr. Singer, a son of the famous sewing machine inventor, was operating upon a bar a few miles above with satisfactory results. It would seem that as long as the gravel will pay to rock or work with the crude appliances now in use, there should be some way of working it upon a large scale profitably. The gravel varies greatly in value; assays from a claim below Ontario running all the way from 14 cents to \$8.41 per cubic yard, the last being from a narrow pay streak, but the greater part of the workable gravel will go from 50 cents \$1 per cubic yard in free gold, besides what is contained in the black sand. The magnetic sand contains little value, but it is so associated with a non magnetic iron sulphide, which is said to assay well, some claiming as high as \$200 and \$300 per ton. Be this as it may, they are certainly worth a careful investigation and a saving of the gold they contain may go far toward solving the problem of the profitable working of the fine gold placers of Snake river.

**An Anti-Courting Crusade.**

The Bachelors' club is an adjunct to the St. Joseph's T. A. and B. society at Bridgeport Conn., which has as members most of the conspicuous Catholic young men, and occupies a handsome club house at Main and Catherine streets. Some months ago the club was organized and for a time the members were very enthusiastic and lived up to the pledge to give up best girls and Sunday night calls. Many of them broke the pledge, and now there is trouble which threatens to break up the society, the Bachelors' club, or half a dozen prospective weddings. The confirmed bachelors in the club within the last few weeks have noticed the absence of many of the members from the club house on Sunday evenings. Last Sunday night an anti courting crusade was planned. At about 9 o'clock twenty members left the club rooms determined to bring the backsliding ones into the field. Some reconnoitering had been done, and when the crusaders left the club rooms they divided into parties of three or four and started for houses in different parts of the city where they were reasonably certain of finding the members they sought. One of each party would ring the bell, and when the door was opened his companions would make their way quietly into the house. The coat and hat of the young man they sought would first be taken, and then the pleasant evening the owner was enjoying in the company of some young woman would be ended rudely by the demand that he accompany them. If he demurred, he was forced to go. About a dozen houses were visited in different parts of the city and sixteen girls were made very unhappy. Three young men were taken from one house; two from another, and in every house visited at least one was

found. One member was found hiding under a sofa and was dragged out and carried away in triumph. The girls and their mothers objected to these summary methods, but the abduction was carried out so quietly in each case that before they fully realized what was going on the young men were in the street. Considerable ill feeling has resulted from the crusade, but the bachelors declare they will continue their trips until all the men they have marked give up their Sunday evening calls and come back into the fold to live up to the pledge. The young women threaten to retaliate, and declare they never again will speak to those responsible for the carrying out of the anti courting crusade.

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