

FIELD FOR DREDGING.

This Modern Method Will Be Adopted Here.

"Gold dredging is an industry that is bound to assume great proportions in the Northwest within a very short time."

The speaker was E. H. Cooper, the consulting and prospecting engineer of the Pomeroy Gold Dredge company, now operating on Burnt river. Mr. Cooper is a guest at the Mineowners' club.

There is a great future in this state for gold dredging, Mr. Cooper says. Where only a short time ago there were two dredges along the entire coast, there are now thirty. Twenty-five of these are operating in Idaho, Montana, California, Oregon and five in Colorado. Australia has 200 dredges in operation.

The public generally has a very indefinite idea about the manner in which gold dredges are operated. In the first place, it costs a fortune to build one. Twenty-seven carloads of material were needed for one of the dredges built by the Pomeroy company along Burnt river. It cost \$70,000. As may be imagined, the dredges have to make considerable money to pay on the investment. However, J. H. Rilling's two dredges in Montana took out \$300,000 during two summers' work at a nominal expense, which gives an idea of their value when operated under fair conditions.

Owing to the demand for dredges, Wolff & Zwicker, Mr. Cooper says, is figuring on putting an addition to their plant for the purpose of building them.

These dredges are not built upon speculation. Before building one, the company has figured to a fraction how much it will be able to earn. For instance, the company's prospector is sent to examine the river where it is desired to operate. Shafts are sunk to bedrock at various distances and should color be found the yardage is blocked out. It is then known just how much dirt will have to be handled and how much per foot that dirt will pay. Mr. Cooper has prospected 20 miles of river channels in eastern Oregon and every one of them will pay to be worked. The dirt prospected, Mr. Cooper says, will average 12 to 30 cents a cubic yard, while the cost of dredging will be from 3 to 8 cents a yard.

After a certain channel or lagoon is prospected and the amount of pay dirt computed, the material for the dredger is shipped in. The dredger must be built according to the character of the soil to be worked. A dredger that would successfully operate in one place would be a total failure in another district.

Mr. Cooper says the little dredger "Golden Giant," belonging to the Hammond company, of Portland, is operating successfully along the Snake river.

That there is an excellent field for the building of gold dredgers in Portland is shown in the following clipping from a California paper by Mr. Cooper:

"Last week two of the big gold dredges on the Feather river, a little below Oroville, resumed operations with electric power, after a shut-down of about a month to change machinery and also because of lack of fuel. Power is supplied by the Yuba Power company from the Yuba river, at a distance of twenty-six miles. One or two more will soon use electric power, as will two new Postlethwaite or Risdon dredges to be launched this month.

"The two new dredges are very large, having a capacity of handling 4000 cubic yards of gravel per 24 hours. The largest yet installed in this state have a limit of 2500 yards. The new ones are of the continuous bucket type, 30x80 feet in size, and designed to reach thirty feet below water and to stack tailings thirty-five feet high. There will then be in the Feather

river, near Oroville, five dredges of the Postlethwaite type, two of the scoop type and a continuous bucket dredge of eastern design.

"The Feather presents exceptional opportunities for successful dredging enterprises in the neighborhood of Oroville, and they will multiply in the future. Thousands of acres of that river bottom will average 15 cents per cubic yard from grass to bedrock, and the bedrock is within reach and soft enough to be practically dug up by the scoops. The Yuba has not proved as good a dredging field as was anticipated, partly on account of the deep deposits of comparatively barren detritus and partly because the stream shifts its bed so frequently.

"The dredging people are generally close mouthed about their affairs, and therefore no reliable statement can be given of the gold produced by dredging. R. H. Postlethwaite, who is in an exceptional position for judging, estimates the total production for 1899 at between \$150,000 and \$100,000. Some of the present dredgers have worked but a few months. New dredgers now building and the continuous operation of all should greatly enlarge the output during 1900. The one operating at Mississippi bar, 150 feet above the American, has been making money for eight months, and one at Lowden's ranch, up on the Trinity, has been running successfully for eighteen months.

"On the Feather, dredges have handled gravel during the year at an average total cost of less than 5 cents per cubic yard. There are several new dredging enterprises in process of negotiation and a number of dredges will undoubtedly be built during the year. When there are considered the successes now established, the hundreds of square miles of auriferous ground that can be worked in no other way and the increasing interest in this safe field, it can be confidently predicted that gold dredging in California will soon yield upward of \$1,000,000 annually and add more to the gold product than hydraulic mining does now."—Portland Telegram.

Capture of William Wallace.

Sheriff Livingston, of Grant county, passed through Sumpter Wednesday on his way to Baker City, where he went to take charge of and return to captivity William Wallace, accused of horse stealing, and who broke jail at the latter named county seat last summer. Wallace was captured at Weiser, Idaho, a few days since, through means of intercepted letters written him by friends. On arrival here, homeward bound, the sheriff's responsibility was added to by the two men, Turner and Keeton, who did the shooting at Granite Thursday, making it necessary that they should be taken to Canyon City.

The Sumpter Chronicle.

The Sumpter Chronicle made its appearance last Thursday, Chronicle Publishing company, M. C. Athey editor and manager. It is republican in politics, and has much to say of "republican prosperity." Typographically it is as neat looking sheet as one would wish to see. If there is room for another paper in Sumpter, the Chronicle will fill the vacancy, and creditably.

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