

**NATURE'S WONDERS.**

**Eastern Oregon a Museum of Topographical Freaks.**

A. J. Johnson, forestry expert for this state, has given the Oregonian an interesting interview on eastern Oregon. He states that there are immense lava flows, or beds, comprising many curious formations in which scarcely a living thing is to be found. In Crook county in a large tract of magnificent yellow pine timber, free from undergrowth, and the ground covered with grass, he found a sink or depression in the ground which exposed the entrance to a lava cave, said to be two miles long. The entrance is large enough to drive a four-horse team into, but the interior—roofs, walls and bottom, are fearfully rough and jagged, so that exploration is very difficult and unpleasant.

Only a few miles from this lava cave the timber ends and a desert is reached. Some four miles out on this desert are a number of ice caves, of considerable extent, but they are of no use to any one, as they are too far from any settlement.

On the upper branches and tributaries of the John Day river are what are known as the famous fossil beds of the Pacific coast, where a great many rare and valuable fossils of prehistoric animals are found imbedded in large hills, and along river and creek bottoms. This region was once inhabited by races of animals not now found on the earth, but just how so many of them came together in one place, to be destroyed and buried there is a query which only Professor Condon can explain.

There are a number of strange geological formations in the territory traveled over by Mr. Johnson in the John Day country, but one of the strangest is what he calls a "rock forest," on a steep mountain side, where there stand pillars of rock, several hundreds of them, some as large as 25 feet in diameter and many from 25 to 150 feet in height, standing like trees in a forest, and having the appearance of a forest which had been visited by a cyclone, breaking off the trees at various heights. The pillars vary greatly in the material of which they are composed, and show streaks, veins, bands and blotches of different colors, forming a most wonderful spectacle. The task of explaining the formation of this wonderful rock forest, Mr. Johnson leaves to the geologist.

Some 20 miles from this rock forest is a section of several thousand acres known as "the devil's potato patch." This patch is covered with round buttes running up to sharp points, some of them 1000 to 1500 feet in height, some a mile through at the base, looking from a distance like a lot of gigantic potato hills. These buttes are covered with sagebrush and bunchgrass. The devil selected a level tract of country for his potato patch and the wagon road wends in and out among these buttes for several miles.

The rivers and lakes of eastern Oregon are also very peculiar. Some lakes are fed by a number of streams and rivers and have no visible outlet. They rise and fall with the changes of the seasons, but are said to be constantly growing smaller and more shallow. Many of the rivers are headed by immense springs, run a distance, disappear and reappear miles away and finally fall into some lake, and that is the end of them. One river particularly attracted Mr. Johnson's attention. It is called Spring river. This river is only three-fourths of a mile in length from head to mouth. It is fed by enormous springs welling up from the ground. There are hundreds of those springs within a small area, all bubbling up like fountains, of all sizes, and where they unite, about 100 yards from the main fountain,

they form a stream 50 feet wide, three feet deep, is cold as ice and clear as crystal. Half a mile from its source the stream is over 100 feet in width. This is the shortest river and the widest for its length to be found anywhere. Mr. Johnson saw hundreds of remarkable and strange things in that wonderful region, an account of which would fill a book.

In regard to the forests of eastern Oregon, he says he has located and reported 1,000,000,000 feet of lumber, which the government has never known existed in that part of the state. The principal varieties are yellow pine, tamarack, lodgepole pine, white fir and mountain spruce. There is considerable sugar pine scattered on buttes in southern Oregon. There are hundreds of thousands of acres bearing but juniper and mountain mahogany, which trees are quite valuable to that country for fencing and fuel. For fence-posts the juniper is a good timber, being very durable, and it is also a good fuel. The mountain mahogany grows to a size of five to six inches in diameter and makes splendid fuel, equal to nut coal.

**Stamps Will Soon Drop at the Gold Hill.**

Col. James A. Panting, manager and under whose personal direction the mines of the Burnt River Mining company at Gold Hill have become great and valuable properties, is in the city on a brief business visit. Col. Panting is as happy as a clam at high tide over the splendid showing being made by his mines and says inside the next 30 days he will have 10 stamps of a 1000 pounds each dropping on ore that will net handsome returns and a continuous run. The mill will crush 35 tons of ore per day. For three years past the Gold Hill mines have been in course of development and at this mine 30 miners are employed. Thousands of feet of development work has been done and there is a world of good ore blocked out. The company has all along preferred to do development work and block out ore rather than be hasty in operating a mill, which policy shows practical management.—Democrat.

**Eight Feet of \$20 Rock**

Word was received in this city yesterday that the ledge had been tapped in the Proebstel tunnel on the property of Proebstel Bros., in Rock creek district. The property is not far from the Chloride and Deer Lodge mines. The tunnel has been run a distance of 680 feet to tap the vein. It is said the face of the tunnel now shows eight feet of ore that assays \$20 a ton. The character of the ore is sulphide similar to that found in the Chloride. This is the most important strike for that district. The Proebstels are residents of La Grande.—Democrat.

**Off For Mexico Again.**

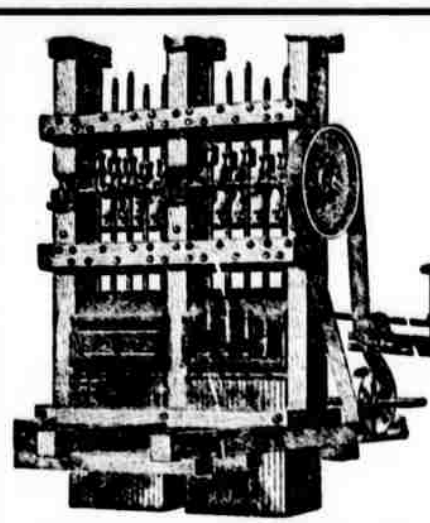
A. L. McEwen received instructions yesterday from the British syndicate which he represents to proceed at once to Old Mexico, for the purpose of experting a mine and he left on the afternoon train. Mr. McEwen was married only about two weeks since and, naturally, was not much elated over the necessity of making the long journey. It was only about a month ago that he returned from Mexico, where he went on a similar mission. The property which he goes to examine now is in a different district from the other.

**Vale Turns a County Seat Trick.**

The town of Vale is erecting a court house by subscription, to be presented to the county of Malheur. It is thought this move will go a long ways toward retaining the county seat at that place. The building is to cost \$5000, and will be modern in every way.

**Lessons in Lace.**

Mrs. Marsh, next door to MINER office, will give practical instructions in lace work. Materials and hundreds of patterns to select from.



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