

MINING IS IN ITS INFANCY.

Mines of Ophir Merely a Wild Cat Speculation

Never was the world more conscious of the great truth that the mining industry is in its infancy. Solomon in all his glory, gazing with rapture upon the gilded minerets of his splendid temple, never dreamed of the fact that the mines of Ophir were a wild-cat speculation compared to the revelations of wealth that would punctuate the future with exclamations of wonder and surprise. The well-heeled Inca of ancient Peru piled high the product of his Klondikes to tempt the brain of Pizarro into the germination of a gorgeous impulse, and doubtless felt within his copper-colored heart that he had gotten the mining business down to a fine point without the cyanide process. Like Solomon he did not live long enough to learn that time must shuffle off a few desolate centuries before the mining industry would be in its infancy. The same may be said of the extravagant old gentleman who formerly managed the affairs of Persia, Egypt, Greece and Rome, who had money to throw at the birds in their day and generation, and whose prospectors were the first to start the story about the Lost Cabin mine, which has been discovered regularly every year since Cleopatra ruined Mark Anthony with a wild cat deal. The wisest of the ancients left no records to show that they anticipated a future greater than the present in which they lived, and apparently the idea never occurred to the most farsighted that the mining industry would not acquire its infancy until the latter part of the nineteenth century in the modern measurement of time. Such, however, is the solemn truth.

While mining has always been carried on, originally by the heathens and later by the chosen of God, it was never conducted along the lines that meant the actual and absolute extraction of ores from a mineral field, and therefore could not be dignified as a matured industry. It is now merely in its infancy, instead of in its long chrysalis condition, because modern scientific principles have broken its shell. Ways and means have been discovered whereby gold can be recovered from any chemical condition in which it may be found and usually with a margin of profit; excepting, of course, the large amount of juicy wealth that is said to be secreted within the waters of the vasty deep. The chemical processes already discovered irresistibly lead to the conclusion that no form of the precious metal will long escape the greedy fingers of man. Thus it happens that no mineral field of the past, operated by crude and unscientific methods, can said to have been exhausted. In short, conditions are now such that all the discoverable gold locked up in the treasures of Mother earth is in a fair way for seizure before the closing hours of the next century unless, indeed, the art of creating that metal reaches a point that makes its possession less desirable to mankind, and the selfishness of the world takes on another form.

The age of invention has locked arms with chemistry in introducing the infancy of the mining industry, and machinery is playing a part of wonderful proportions. There is not a known gold field in the world today that does not claim infancy in development; and the same is true as to other metals, subject to conditions of the markets. In the light of modern progress the era of worked-out mineral zone seems an absurdity. Like the tin mines of Cornwall, England, which have increased their product for thousands of years—like the copper mines

of Michigan, which are so deep that the Chinese authorities on the other side of their shafts are likely to raise the question of territorial rights—the quartz of the western American mineral fields give infinite promise of durability and wealth, and the infancy of mining bids fair to develop into a splendid maturity that will give to the world a commercial momentum never dreamed of in the golden eras of the past.—Western Mining World.

Thousand Tons of Shipping Ore on Dump.

Wm. Muir, the veteran miner of the Union county group of mines, is in the city for a few days. Mr. Muir has been at work on his mine for seven years and has always been very reticent as to what it and other mines of the district contained, but he is now willing to let the public know his purposes. He does not intend to wait longer for the development of the district, but will begin the shipment of his ore to a smelter in July. He has 1000 tons on the dump of his mine and intends to ship 100 tons this summer. But his shipments will not stop with that; it will be continued steadily, if there is any profit in it, and of that he is confident. He has ample means to carry on the work on any reasonable scale, and has no fear of the outcome. He must, of course, select the ore for shipment in order to make it pay. The ore must yield 50 ounces or \$25 per ton before it will repay the expenses of shipment, but Mr. Muir understands his mine well enough to know that it will yield better than this. Indeed, he expects from the dump and from what he will take from the mine meanwhile, to reap the fruits of his years labor, a small fortune. It is to be hoped that, as the mining activity on the upper waters of the river began with Muir's work, he will be the first to demonstrate the wisdom of his efforts.—La Grande Chronicle.

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