

The Sumpter Miner

Official Paper of the Town of Sumpter.

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AS A matter of fact, what did the Supreme court decide relative to our war acquired possessions? Headlines in the newspapers give "all kinds" of interpretations to the opinion. Some say "the constitution follows the flag," and others the reverse of that statement. The writer confesses that after reading the Associated press report of the decision, he couldn't guess where that highest tribunal was at.

THE Portland Telegram of last Thursday contains this characteristic editorial paragraph:

"And this," said Congressman Dick, reflectively, "is The Dalles." Yes, sir, and a place of a good deal of historic and considerable present interest it is, too. It would have been well for Oregon if the visiting congressman could have had spread out before their actual vision a panorama of the country—Eastern Oregon and Washington and Idaho—that lies between The Dalles, and to which it is the gateway.

The "panorama" could have been promptly and effectively "spread out" before their actual vision" by simply handing each one of them a copy of the O. R. & N. company's book on "Oregon, Washington and Idaho." THE MINER has no idea General Paesenger Agent Craig neglected the opportunity.

IN ITS issue of Monday the Oregonian states that a brother of Senator Clark, of Montana, had been in Portland investigating the feasibility of erecting a smelter there, but that he had learned that the smelter trust would oppose and probably defeat the enterprise. This local story is the text of a characteristic Oregonian editorial. Both writers show ignorance of the subject treated that is really amusing. The idea that a Montana mining man would go to Portland to study the business side of a smelter proposition—other than local conditions—and there stumble on to the fact that there is a smelter trust, to which an independent plant would be objectionable, strikes the average reader as being somewhat ridiculous.

The great obstacle to be overcome, as the case is stated by the Oregonian, would be to find a market for the lead bullion; for, says the editorial, speaking of the smelter trust: "It is the only purchaser of lead in considerable quantities." The trust buys lead because it owns the refineries, and buys it just as it does gold and silver and copper, as the smelter does ores. All four of these metals come from the smelter as base bullion, and must be separated, "refined," to become marketable. A refinery which only separates the base from the precious metals is not an expensive plant. Such a one is operated in connection with the reduction works at Everett, and its lead product finds a ready market in the Orient. Japan alone will buy all the lead that is turned out of all the smelters on this coast.

Mr. Clark evidently had some other reason for turning down Portland as a smelter site.

"THE men who are doing the most for eastern Oregon are not those men who are doing the talking or most strenuously "promoting" the interests of the section,

but the men who are doing the real work, the hard work if you please. A man who, like William Muir, has worked silently for years piling up rich ore, anxious himself to see what his mine contained, without trying to sell a hole in the ground, such a man is entitled to much more of the country's esteem than he who digs a prospect hole and goes about prating of his rich discovery."

THE MINER begs leave to differ from the esteemed La Grande Chronicle in this view of the case. Here in eastern Oregon there is unquestionably one of the most extensive deposits of rich gold ore in the known world. Men have pursued Mr. Muir's tactics for more than a quarter of a century, apparently knowing that they had a good thing and unwilling to let any outsiders know that there were opportunities here for others to engage in profitable mining. The result of this policy is the deplorable fact, acknowledged by all, that the gold fields of eastern Oregon have been slower in development than any others on the continent. Within the last three years some little publicity has been given to our mineral wealth, and within that time more progress has been made in opening up the country than during all of its previous history. THE MINER submits this undisputed and indisputable fact as proof of the unwisdom of the policy commended by the Chronicle. One energetic, noisy, persistent, versatile promoter is worth more to the country than a car load of industrious, secretive men such as Mr. Muir and others.

That his system, even so far as his own interests are concerned, is a losing one, is evident that it would be a waste of words to argue the point. By selling a part of his holdings, he could have secured capital with which to accomplish in months that for which he has laboriously toiled for years—and even in case of success the long years of waiting and hardship and vitality consuming labor is worth more than the price.

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