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TONIC FOR THE TOWN

R. E. STRAHORN PROPOSES TWO IMPORTANT ENTERPRISES.

Will Give Money Toward the Construction of a Road to Burnt River and Will Buy School District Bonds for the Erection of a Brick Building—Improvements in the Water System to Be Made This Season.

R. E. Strahorn, who owns the water system, arrived in town several days since. His presence here at this time, as usual, is an invigorating tonic for the entire community. He expresses the greatest confidence in Sumpter and says that the extension of the railroad is going to benefit the town greatly, because it will eventually connect us with the farming and stock raising country to the southwest, which is one of our resources entirely too much neglected at present, in the all absorbing pursuit of the yellow metal.

But Mr. Strahorn is not a vague theorist, a mere advisor. He suggests two important enterprises which Sumpter should consummate without delay. He wants a wagon road constructed to the farming sections of Burnt river and a brick school house built here. He offers to give as much money for the road as any other individual or corporation and to buy the school district bonds, issued for the purpose of erecting the building, paying par for the bonds, that shall draw only five per cent interest. Now, here are two propositions worth considering.

Regarding the advantages of that wagon road, there can be but one opinion. They have frequently been pointed out in these columns. It is stated that the nearest point can be reached in a distance of twelve miles, with several miles of road already constructed on each end. If this thoroughfare is constructed there is no doubt but what Sumpter will secure the trade of that section, for the all potent reason that here the farmers will find a ready market for their produce, and here only, a market without competition or limit. It is further stated that the county authorities have informed the residents of the Powder river valley that they must secure an outlet in this direction, as the county cannot longer keep in repair the forty-five miles of expensive road to Baker City.

In talking this matter over with business men, Mr. Strahorn stated that the only obstacle in placing Sumpter securities in the east is found in the fact that this is exclusively a mining camp, and that to the eastern mind agricultural resources give to a town the desired permanence and stability. A road to Burnt river valley will remove this one obstacle.

Mayor Robbins has become greatly interested in the enterprise and says that as soon as the Fourth of July festivities are over, a meeting of the Business Men's league will be called to tackle the job. Not only the wagon road, but a telephone line must be constructed, mail routes and stage lines established.

Regarding the school building, Mr. Strahorn is equally urgent in his desire to have it erected, and convincing in his reasons for believing it will benefit Sumpter. In the first place, a building

to cost, say \$12,000, will mean a tax on the district of only \$600 a year, a mere bagatelle, less by three or four times than the rent would be for buildings with no conveniences whatever. Suitable buildings and a good school system will attract farmers, stockmen and miners to Sumpter as a place for a home. He says that in each of six western towns in which he is interested and which have taken his advice to give the best possible educational advantages, he can name one man who has been attracted thither by the schools who has been of far more value to the town than the extra expense of the school building; besides scores of others whose aggregate investments would pay the cost incurred a dozen times over.

Mr. Strahorn says that his water supply for the system here is abundant. He has bought 2250 feet of pipe with which to replace the Mill street main, from Granite to the southern railway crossing, being an extension of 400 feet. For extensions on other streets, notably Bonanza, Auburn and Granite, 5000 feet are now en route here, all being converse lock joint pipe. These improvements will be made during the present summer. A fence will be built around the reservoir, work beginning in a few days.

Prosperous Burnt River Farmers.

Dr. Brock made a trip through the Burnt river country this week, spending two days there. He says there is a remarkably prosperous farming community in that section, the trade of which by rights belongs to Sumpter, but that there is no use trying to secure it until good roads are constructed. He came home by way of Unity and Whitney and reports the roads between those two points as almost impassable. The county has recently finished five miles of road on this route, but the remaining portion of the distance renders the whole practically useless.

David Copping Receives a Decoration.

David Copping was the surprised recipient a few days since of a handsome silver medal souvenir, which came to him from the Canadian government, in honor of having served in one of Canada's military companies during the Fenian raid in 1870. The medal is attached to a heavy silk badge and bears a splendid likeness of the late Queen in raised work on one side, while the other side is properly inscribed, showing the service performed by which the medal is merited, also its owner's name.

Mark Hanna's Nephew Here.

John P. Hanna, of Cincinnati, nephew of Senator Mark Hanna, accompanied by Colonel James A. Panting, of the Gold Hill mine, east of Baker City, came up on a business and sight-seeing trip last Saturday. Secretary James Flood, of the Golconda, met them here and escorted them to his quarters at the mine, from which point they could easily visit any of the other working properties in the Cracker district.

Will Study Mining Practically.

Professor Tyng and wife, of Pullman, Washington, were arrivals on last Saturday's morning train, en route to the Concord mine, where they will spend two or three weeks of their school vacation. The professor is associated with the mining department of the Washington State Agricultural college, of Pullman. Several of the students will join them and take advantage of the opportunities offered in practical mining as carried on in the district mentioned.

FOURTH AT SUMPTER.

Attractive Program For That Day Completed.

The committee in charge of the several departments of the Fourth of July celebration have about completed arrangements. Today the executive committee finished the work of formulating the program. It has been decided that the whole shall be "pulled off" in the center of the business portion of town, which leaves no reason for complaint from any source. The literary and musical exercises will be held at the corner of Granite and Mill streets, as will also the rock drilling contest. The horse races will be on Mill street and the tournament on Granite.

The grand parade will start on its march at 10 o'clock, under the direction of Mayor J. H. Robbins, president of the day. The procession will disband at Granite and Mill, where immediately thereafter Mrs. W. R. Hawley will read the Declaration of Independence, Mrs. Joseph F. Keller will recite "A Legion on Gettysburg," and the oration of the day by a spellbinder not yet selected will be delivered, interspersed with band and vocal music, under the direction of Mrs. White, Mrs. Swan and Mrs. Kahler.

The principal event of the day, the rock drilling contest, will be started at 1:30 p. m. The prizes have not yet been definitely determined, but the committee declares that they will not be less than \$250 for the first and \$50 for the second. The committee to make the award will be A. J. Stinson, Joe Mikel and one other, not yet named.

Following this the wet test hose and hub to hub races will be run, with a \$15 purse for each, Messrs. Bellinger, Dumphy and Tedrowe committee.

For the egg, sack and three-leg race the prizes will be for each, two dollars for the first; one dollar, second; fifty cents, third, Messrs. Hillier Swiggett and Ingram, judges.

The horse tournament will be an attractive novelty for this section. Prizes of \$35 and \$15 are offered for this event; Messrs. McEwen, Kitchen and Brown judges, starters and timers.

In the evening there will be greased pole climbing and pig catching contests and a band concert. A lot, donated by W. C. Calder, is the prize offered for the victor in the first and the pig for the second.

The committee on decoration consists of Mrs. Swan, Mrs. Yergler and Mrs. Lang.

Much interest is being manifested in the voting contest for the Goddess of Liberty. Today at noon the race seemed to be between Miss Belle Cushman, Miss Jessie Greenlee and Miss Eugenia Keup, all having over 200 votes, the first leading with 295. It is rumored around the polling place that a syndicate has been organized to put plenty of money into the campaign at the last moment and elect Miss Carmen Stoddard.

Troop B Drilling Daily.

Captain T. K. Muir, of Troop B, the "Sumpter Rough Riders," O. N. G., arrived from Portland Monday and will remain with the troop until after the military encampment at La Grande, which commences July 5th. The cavalry company will leave here on the morn-

ing of that date, riding over the mountains to North Powder and thence down the level valley to La Grande, returning five days later by way of Baker City. The members of the troop are drilling every evening preparatory for the celebration of the Fourth here and the encampment following.

RICH STRIKE ON THE SNAKE.

Owner Says it Runs From \$8 to \$18 in Gold Per Cubic Foot.

Many reports of a rich find of placer gold on the Oregon side of Snake river have been told and published during the past week. A letter received by THE MINER from J. H. Brown, who is in that vicinity, confirms the truth of the more reasonable of these reports. The Baker City Democrat of this morning publishes the first detailed account of the strike, in an interview with the owner of the ground, W. W. Oliver. It says:

Mr. Oliver has just returned from a visit to the new strike. He says that it is located on the Big Bend of Snake river, on the Oregon side of the stream, and about nine miles from Palmer station on the O. R. & N., which is the nearest railroad station.

The ground is all being located as placer ground but it is not placer gold that is found there.

According to Mr. Oliver, there is nothing like it in the country and at first he was of the opinion that nothing of a similar nature had ever been found in any other country, but he has since learned that a find in every way resembling this was uncovered in south Africa some years ago. What they find in this new discovery is not placer gold, but sulphite ore mingled with clay. It is found first about 60 feet from the surface, which is the lowest point reached so far. The substance, including the clay, runs from \$8 to \$18 per ton. From a double handful of the clay about a teaspoonful of sulphites is often obtained; it hardly ever is less than that, or sometimes it is as much as a tablespoonful. The sulphites are found in three layers, mingled with the clay, and while in some places it is richer than others, Mr. Oliver says the average is as above stated.

The extent of the deposit is not known for the reason that no prospecting of any consequence has been done. The shaft on the discovery claim is within fifty feet of Snake river and water was somewhat troublesome. A five-inch pump was sufficient to keep it down so that the men could work with comfort and no inconvenience while sinking the shaft.

Mr. Oliver says it is a concentrating proposition and yet that hardly expresses the idea, because old Nature has concentrated the gold in sulphites and all that the miner will have to do is to get rid of the clay. Occasionally the clay is rather hard, almost soapstone, and might, further back from the river, be quite hard, so that it would be necessary to use a crusher, although that is purely problematical.

In sinking from the surface a substance is encountered which has been termed a false bedrock, it is really a hardpan formation just below a strata of barren gravel. No gold values worthy of consideration are found above the 60 foot level.

It is the theory of those who have examined the country that the formation is a part of an old river bed.

Between 300 and 400 claims have been staked out.

A company of Salt Lake people, composed mainly of O. S. L. men, have secured a large tract of the land and are preparing to thoroughly prospect it with diamond drills and shafts. In the opinion of Mr. Oliver it is a very rich find.