

THE SUMPTER MINER

VOL. II.

SUMPTER, OREGON, JULY 31, 1901

NO. 47

CABLE COVE IS A WONDER

District Full of Ledges Carrying Refractory Rock—Million Dollars Worth of Work in Progress.

No one can form any accurate idea of the vast amount of important development work that is being done in the mining districts of eastern Oregon, until he goes in person out into these gold ribbed Blue mountains; away from the present quiet camps, and see for himself the numerous shafts and tunnels that are being sunk and driven into the ledge laden hills. Nor can he acquire a true conception of the mineral deposits, their great extent and inestimable value, that are being revealed by this systematic, intelligent work, until he has eaten the flapjacks and bacon of the hospitable prospector and slept with the miner on his fir bough bunk, met both as a brother, listened to their stories and diplomatically induced them to "show me;" for your miner man does not speak by the book when talking to a stranger on the curb, when he comes to town for grub and powder. The local newspapers can't tell the whole story, because more time and labor and money are required to collect the information than any of them can afford to expend. There are some properties in the district that are ever kept before the public gaze. These are owned by men who spend much time in camp and are ever willing to take reporters into their confidence. But there are more mines being developed, and rapidly approaching the producing period, that are never mentioned in the papers than there are of those that monopolize the mining news columns.

Last week a MINER representative spent three days in the Cable Cove district, just long enough to learn that two weeks at least would be required to visit the properties on which active work is now in progress, and secure anything like complete data for a comprehensive article on the one district. This, therefore, does not pretend to be such a story. F. J. Hard said in an interview in Portland the other day: "There is no best district in eastern Oregon; they are all good." There is doubtless much truth in that statement, so no claim will be made that the Cove is superior to other districts, but one thing is certain—excepting other mining sections of eastern Oregon, it is a "world beater." Of course, no authoritative figures can be given, but the writer believes that in the territory between the Bald mountain and the North Fork of the John Day, a distance of seven or eight miles, and an equal distance in the other directions, with the Black Hawk as the center, work, including the erection of plants, is now in progress that will cost a round million of dollars. This area will take in a portion of Cracker Creek district, will probably include the Mountain Bell, on which a power hoist and pump are in operation, sinking a 1,000 foot shaft; and perhaps also the Oregon King, on which a long tunnel is being driven. No attempt will be made to mention all the properties, in an effort to prove the above million dollar statement.

The Cove proper is a broad basin sur-

rounded by mountains, the average altitude of the summits of which is about 7,000 feet, from 1,000 to 1,500 above the lowest point in the basin. The mineral is found almost everywhere. It has been mined for many years. In the early days it was thought to produce free milling ores, and two stamp mills were erected; one on the California and the other on the Red Chief, both now idle. With depth, the character of the ore changed to refractory, carrying greater values in gold and silver, but in combination with iron pyrites. One peculiarity of the early day methods was to start the workings near the summit. The Crown Point and California are notable instances of this blunder, no explanation of which the writer has ever heard. Both are now driving tunnels from the base of the mountains, using air drills. At the former, under the management of Price Capsey, a distance of 500 feet has been driven, and the tunnel is thought to be about half way to the ledge. Friday, 300 feet of air pipe was laid, connected with a steam power blower, to purify the air in the tunnel. Away up near the summit, at the old workings, thirty or forty tons of rock that goes better than \$50 are still on the dump, that will not pay to ship. This property is owned by a millionaire and will, without doubt, be a billion producer within a year.

Every one posted on the subject over that way declares emphatically that the Imperial is a mine and a rich one. The vein is said not to be a large one, but the values it carries are immense, paying large profits when shipped, even under existing generally prohibitive charges for transportation. It is reported to be the belief of the owner of the Black Dwarf, Menno Unzieker, that he has the Imperial ledge. Much prospecting has been done on this claim, and now that the ledge has been uncovered, preparations are being made for deep sinking. Substantial buildings are being erected, and last week L. O. Huffman was awarded the contract for hauling the machinery for a steam hoist and pump.

Mention was made several weeks since of an ingenious over shot water wheel contrivance, constructed by Mr. Shank with which to pump the water from his shaft on the Standard. It works to perfection and costs nothing to operate. He is now down only twenty odd feet and is taking out some very good ore from a two-foot vein that is widening with depth. He will connect his hoist to the water power at an early day.

On the other side of the divide from the Cove, which is included in Cable Cove district, the Baby McKee is the big proposition, being extensively developed with air drills, under the management of Colonel Grayson. The public is familiar with the operations of this company, that is driving a 3000-foot tunnel.

At present the greatest interest is manifested in the claims located on Big

Limber creek, because it is a comparatively new section and the highest assay values obtained in eastern Oregon are found in ore from the several properties already opened. Until last year the Golden Rule, owned by Messrs. Fisher and Hillier of this city, far down the gulch, was practically the only prospected claim there. Several years ago a car load of \$54 ore was shipped to the Everett smelter, which scarcely paid the cost. There is no wagon road into the gulch and the rock had to be packed to the Crown Point, two and a half miles.

But last year Eugene Bartholf, a veteran prospector from Colorado, one skilled in the craft apparently to the occult degree, drifted into that dark, heavily timbered canyon, and found beneath the deep wash of ages a number of broad, blind ledges that experts declare are destined to add many millions to the world's store of gold and silver. He had nothing to guide him except the formation as exposed in the bed of the creek and declares that the job of definitely locating the veins would have been really a fascinating occupation, had it been a trifle more difficult. Mr. Bartholf had realized \$80,000 from the sale of prospects before he stuck a pick in eastern Oregon soil, all of which he lost in business ventures. He says he thinks he has paid enough for the knowledge that he is a prospector and not a business man and will in future act on this dearly bought information. Several of the claims which he located are now mines, the aggregate value of which are today more than ten million dollars. He spent \$51,000 of borrowed money on the famous Polar Star, in Colorado, now worth \$3,000,000, and had to turn it over to his creditors because the character of the ore changed, and during the financial panic of '93 he couldn't raise \$12,000 with which to put in a cyanide plant, the plates of his mill failing to save the gold. These trifling incidents in his career he is induced to tell through the influence of the confidence inspiring glare of the camp fire. He again has a fortune within his grasp, and all who know him, hope that he will realize to the extent of his deserts and cash in at an early date.

The principal work done there so far has been on the Evening and Morning Star claims of the Constellation group, the Gipsy King and Gipsy Queen, 1400 feet down the stream. Three more promising prospects can't be found anywhere. The ledge has been cut in short crosscut tunnels in both the Stars, strong, well mineralized ledges between perfect walls. In the Evening Star the wonderful showing is made of the vein widening from six to eight feet from the top to the bottom of the tunnel.

On the King an ore shoot has been uncovered near the creek that gives the alluring assays of from \$100 to \$400. This fact having been noised around, many mining men have gone there and, on invitation of the management of the company, taken away hundreds of pounds of this rich rock. The ledge has been exposed by open cuts for about 100 feet, and this entire distance is now being stripped. The crosscut tunnel is now in 140 feet, and the country rock is becoming slightly mineralized, indicating the near approach to the ledge. The formation there is absolutely solid and mining men of experience declare that when the ledge is cut, a mine of great wealth and permanence will be added to the ever lengthening list in eastern Oregon. The King, aside from treasury stock sold in the east, is owned entirely by Sumpter people.

Across the creek, on the Queen, a tun-

nel has been run more than 100 feet on the same ledge, or rather on top of it, from the water level, little depth having been gained. This has been necessary owing to the lay of the ground. Ore can be found almost anywhere a foot from the bottom of the tunnel, and from now on depth will be gained rapidly and there is scarcely a doubt but that in fifty feet more they will be in solid ore. Superintendent Pattie, who lives in a substantial house on the property with his wife, has done an excellent piece of work. Mrs. Pattie has not been to town since last October.

It is an interesting group of men who are working on these and adjoining properties, Messrs. Otness, Mather, Williams, Isaacs, Sherman, Huffman, Harrison and others. They all own interests in some of these companies, besides individually holding claims of their own, and to a man are loyal to the gulch. There is no chance of a labor strike there. These miners are working for money with which to develop their own properties, which, of course, they hope will make millionaires of them. Harrison is the most envied of the group, for he has his wife with him, who looks after household duties, while the bachelors are playing solo to see who will wash the dishes and cut fire wood. Huffman, who owns a big group of claims that runs over to the Lake creek side of the divide, does most of the transportation business.

There is no question but what the Cable Cove district has some great mines in embryo. Wagon roads are most urgently needed now. But even with good roads, it will scarcely pay to ship the larger portion of the ores—when there is no profit in \$54 rock. A matting plant on the ground is the solution of the problem. The ores are about neutral, with plenty of iron, and it is thought a sufficient per cent of copper and lead to carry the values into the matte. Lime rock is near at hand and charcoal, a substitute for coke, can be burned anywhere. Timber and water are there in abundance. These are the necessary adjuncts to successful smelting, and will be utilized at no distant day.

Nicotine Company Incorporated.

The MINER has just furnished stock certificates, stock journals, ledgers, record books and corporation seal for the newly organized Nicotine Gold Mining company, of Sumpter, which will develop the Wilson group of five claims adjoining the Red Boy ground on the west. J. H. Robbins, N. C. Richards and John Wilson are the incorporators, the latter being the original owner.

Work Started at the Cracker Summit.

The Cracker Summit Gold Mining company has commenced work on the lower crosscut tunnel of its claims above the Golconda and Columbia mines, and expects to do some extensive work this summer and next winter. A small force was put on last Saturday, which will be increased after August 5, when the local manager, W. H. B. Smith, will take up his residence at the property again.

H. O. Baker today received a fresh shipment of water melons, cantiloupes, cherries, berries, grapes, green corn, a variety of fruits and vegetables. Fresh fish, poultry and eggs always on hand. Mill street market.

Don't overlook an opportunity to secure one of the cash prizes advertised on page 10 of this paper.