

THE SUMPTER MINER

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CONFESSION OF FAILURE.

IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPILE ACCURATE MINING STATISTICS.

So Much Work in Progress in the Various Districts Surrounding Sumpter that Complete Information Can't be Secured.—Figures May Not Lie, but They Never Tell the Whole Truth.—Difficulties met With in Collecting Facts.—All of which Means that Eastern Oregon is Becoming a Rich Empire.

It is an old and generally accepted proverb that "figures do not lie," but they rarely tell the whole truth. They never do, when marshalled by an honest statistician who is endeavoring to present to the reader the condition of the mining industry in a live district.

Several times during recent weeks THE MINER has started to prepare an article giving accurate, authentic facts regarding the work which has been done and is now in progress in the several districts immediately tributary to Sumpter, but as often as this task has been taken up, just so often has it been abandoned, in hopeless despair. There is no trouble to collect a great mass of information on the subject, as the columns of this paper during the past year testify. It is only a matter of mental industry to compile and tabulate these facts; but when the task should be thought finished, the compiler would know better than anyone else how inexorably incomplete his work would be. This may sound a trifle paradoxical, but the language employed is used advisedly.

The fact of the matter is, that before all the information regarding any single district could be collected, much of it would be ancient history, and to attempt to assign each industrial enterprise accomplished or being prosecuted to any limited space of time would be farcically inaccurate. Go into any of the district surrounding Sumpter this season with such an object in view, put in a week trying to cover a half dozen square miles, write and publish your story, and the first man you meet from that territory will ask you why you didn't mention so and so's proposition, the biggest thing there—except his own. He chances to know of this other one.

Only those who speak on the subject from experience can appreciate the correctness of this idea. The explanation is simple enough. The seeker after truth soon learns that if he confines his research to the county roads he will roll up in his blankets at night, with a practically empty note book. He will next acquire the information that if he goes only where the pack ponies travel, he will overlook many a bet. Of all the people in the world, miners and prospectors put in more time attending to their own business and less in looking after the affairs of their neighbors, so second hand information is scarce and hard to get. Unless the trail to the miner's cabin passes very near to that of his neighbor, he knows little or nothing of his neighbor's claim, ledge, shaft or tunnel, and if the little log hut is hidden from sight just beyond that rise, or down in that gulch, he knows nothing of it or its owner's existence, save what giant powder blasts may reveal to a practiced ear. Climbing for pleasure or

idle curiosity over thickly wooded mountains is not a favorite amusement with the average miner man.

Of the big companies, those operating steam power plants, of course, it is no trick at all to get all kinds of information, because every body knows all about them. But he who tries to verify the same, even the statements of the general manager or the superintendent, one by the other—if both will talk—discovers one central fact; namely, that somebody has been working off a pipe dream. When it comes to securing information from the scores of outsiders who know all about the affairs of any particular company, which they were given in strictest confidence by a bosom friend who works on the night shift, or got drunk last week with the assayer—well, such stuff is as worthless as a tip from a race track touter.

And what does all this signify, the reader doubtless asks. It means this much, and that is a whole lot: That in these Blue mountains, gold ledge veined, a great army of men, of that class the most daring, energetic, resourceful and determined that inhabits the Earth, is engaged in a plundering enterprise against Nature. They have learned that here the old dame has stored her richest treasure and they are going to loot the hidden vaults; with drills and dynamite blast open the gneiss and granite walls. There is no longer any doubt that the gold is here, and as men succeed in taking it from its hiding place, they spend it more liberally than do any others who either work or scheme to eat; they build splendid cities, live luxuriously, make tradesmen rich, artisans prosperous and newspaper men tired.

There is no more doubt of the great future of the gold fields of eastern Oregon than there is of the fact that the Creator also made "little apples."

Many Hungry Bears Near Long Creek.

Never within the memory of the oldest mountaineers have the bears been so bold as now, says a recent report to the Oregonian from Long Creek. Stockmen are becoming apprehensive for the safety of their calves and sheep, for the reason that the bears are being literally starved out of their retreats in the mountains, and have begun to prey upon the young stock. The severe frost that ruined garden vegetables and fruit blossoms early in the season has also cut off the natural food of the bears by blighting the huckleberries, as well as the numerous other things upon which they subsist. Throughout the entire mountain region there are wild berries in abundance during ordinary seasons, and the bears prefer to remain in their native haunts unless forced out by the pangs of hunger. This summer there are absolutely no berries at all, and there is even a scarcity of wild honey, on account of the blossoms being killed by the frost, thus preventing the bees from working. The bears are therefore on short rations, and are forced to confine themselves to a diet of red ants and pine boughs. It is the opinion of stockmen that before winter sets in the bears are going to become extremely troublesome. It has even been suggested that for the protection of young stock, hunting parties will have to be organized and the mountains cleared of wild animals before the nuisance can be abated or safety become assured.

T. G. Harrison, agent for Giant powder company.

Those who know the comforts of a good hotel, always patronize the Capital; Mrs. G. B. Tedrows, proprietor.

THE "O.K." IS ALL RIGHT

Silver Dick Ledge Cut at a Depth of 85 Feet.

The Sunday night shift working in the tunnel of the Oregon King Gold Mining company, on the Silver Dick claim, broke into the ledge. The face of the tunnel was then in something over 200 feet, and the ledge was encountered at least forty feet nearer the mouth than had been calculated, owing, of course, to the favorable and unexpected trend and dip.

Messrs. Baldwin and Swiggett, officers of the company, came in from the mine yesterday afternoon, bringing with them some of the ore taken from the ledge at this point. Assays are being made, but returns have not been received as THE MINER goes to press. Frank Baldwin this forenoon made three pan tests and got a good string of colors in each instance. There is no question but what the rock is unusually rich for that section. It is also different in appearance from any yet found in the Cracker Creek district, being almost black in color, speckled with small iron particles. Both the general character of the ore and the pan tests indicate that there is a considerable percentage of sulphurets, all of which, in this country, carry gold values that pan tests do not reveal.

The depth from the surface at which the ledge is cut is about 85 feet. The width of the ledge is not known, as the foot-wall has not been reached. Since penetrating the ore body about ten feet has been driven on the ledge, which is now solid and covers the entire face of the tunnel.

The Oregon King is controlled by eastern men, several of whom are connected with the postal service, including Postmaster Hicks, of Philadelphia, and Charles Hedges, at the head of the free delivery system, Washington. L. V. Swiggett sold to these gentlemen the Silver Dick claim while east last winter. Mr. Hedges was out here a couple of months since, made the payments then due and organized the company, which is a strong one financially.

Eastern Stockholder in the Sunrise Here.

Emile Felgner, of Dubuque, Iowa, arrived in Sumpter this forenoon. He is largely interested in the Sunrise Mining company, which owns properties both in the Greenhorn and Ixex districts. In company with W. C. Calder, he will go out to the Sunrise claim, adjoining the Inter-Mountain, tomorrow or next day and inspect the work now being pushed there. Two shafts are sinking a shaft directly on the ledge and are now down about thirty feet, in good ore, which carries an average assay value of from \$70 to \$80 in gold, silver and copper. Mr. Felgner will be shown over other districts adjacent to Sumpter, remaining here a week or more; when he will make a trip to the coast before returning home.

Found Deposit of Excellent Marble.

Yesterday M. E. Bain went out above timber line, on the high hills northeast of town, looking for a water power that he heard could be secured in that vicinity. On the other side of the divide he found, at a great elevation, three snow-fed lakes, one of considerable magnitude. Snow remains at that elevation

all the year round. In order to bring the water in these natural reservoirs to Sumpter, it would have to be either conveyed in a ditch around by Bourne, or else through a 1000-foot tunnel. He doubts whether the supply would justify the expenditure necessary by the adoption of either plan. He did, however, make a valuable find on the trip, a 50-foot wide deposit of marble, of excellent quality and of remarkable beauty. It is snow white in color, with a network of black slate seams running in every direction. He says when he cashes in on his mining deal, he will build his residence here in Sumpter of stone from this find—if the county will build a road to the quarry; that this is the most inaccessible section he has yet reached in the Blue mountains and the trip the hardest he has made.

Constellation Contract Let.

Eugene Bartholf came in from Cable Cove district today. He says he has all the men available in Big Limber gulch working on the buildings now being erected on the Constellation, which it is desired to complete as soon as possible. The contract for driving the long tunnel on the Evening Star claim has been let to Probasco & Chipman, of Baker City. It is for 200 feet, with the privilege of taking it for 500 feet. It will be a continuation of the first tunnel driven which cut the ledge in about sixty feet, but at comparatively shallow depth. The contractors will begin work in a few days. A Wagon load of supplies were taken out today, and tomorrow 1200 feet of trackage and an ore cut will be sent to the mine. H. O. Hoffman is doing the hauling.

Western Mining World Representative Here

J. S. Johnstone, representing the Western Mining World, of Butte, one of the best mining papers published in the West, is inspecting the gold fields of eastern Oregon, for the purpose of writing an exhaustive article of this section for that journal. He is traveling over the country on horseback, following the trails when necessary, so as to overlook none of the good things. Before coming here he made a trip through the Seven Devils' country.

Contract for 100 feet On the Gironda.

Al Hillier has let the contract for 100 feet of tunnel on his Gironda, adjoining the Silver Dick. The work was started Monday and the tunnel is being driven in on the ledge, from where it outcrops. The ledge is a large one, more than twenty feet wide, and the ore is characteristic of that found in the Cracker Creek district, carrying small values on the surface, which increase rapidly with depth.

THE MINER is receiving daily, many new subscribers, who are taking advantage of the special offer, advertised elsewhere in this issue, to participate in the distribution of \$15,000. The offer is an honest, bona fide one, open to old and new subscribers. Read it on page 10 of THE MINER.

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