

# The Sumpter Miner

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UNDER date of August 30, a Washington press dispatch says that the Chinese government through its legation there has asked the state department to see that justice is done by the state of Oregon to the Chinese who were attacked by rioters in Baker City, Oregon, on August 8. On that date about 50 Chinese, who were employed in the city, were attacked by a mob, three of them were shot and the remainder were driven out of the town and forbidden to return. The matter was promptly reported to the Chinese legation by the nearest Chinese consul and the legation authorities, having awaited what they considered a reasonable time for some activity on the part of the local authorities, have now presented the matter to the state department, pointing out that they do so because the local authorities have shown no disposition to prosecute the offenders and make reparation. The department will, following the usual course, forward the complaint to the governor of Oregon with the request for an explanation. The riot did not occur in Baker City, but down on Burnt river, somewhere.

EASTERN Oregon gold fields have cause for self congratulation over the fact that a local syndicate, headed by Mayor J. H. Robbins, secured the valuable mining ground in Cracker Creek district, contiguous to the North Pole mine, instead of Alexander Baring, the London banker, who wanted it, but was not willing to pay a reasonable price. The people now in control will develop the ground, install a mill of adequate capacity and take out the gold, which will be beneficial to the entire region. On the other hand, had the English company bought the ground, it would doubtless have remained undeveloped for years. While in Baker City recently, Mr. Baring stated to a reporter that the policy of the North Pole, in the future as in the past, would be to block out ore bodies and mill only what rock is necessary, to get it out of the way of the miners. For several years past the company has been operating only ten stamps, when fifty could have been worked to advantage. This season ten more are being installed, when a hundred could be fed with rich ore. Such companies are of little benefit to the district and it is fortunate that men who know they are alive have secured control of this marvelously rich ground.

THE MINER publishes today a communication from R. H. Kemp, voicing the surprise, complaint, almost irritation, that others have experienced who have come to eastern Oregon to write of its gold fields, when they have found it impossible to secure the information desired, especially accurate official figures relative to the production of the two or three dozen mines. But, as THE MINER has once or twice before had occasion to state, it believes that Mr. Kemp is mistaken in his opinion that any state law can be enacted that will force mine owners to make public the output of their properties.

At first glance, one might suppose that this could be accomplished by taxing mines on a basis of their gross production, backed by an elaborate system of governmental supervision of the clean-up. But THE MINER is informed by an attorney who has made a special study of this subject that even this method

would fail; that mines can not be so taxed, unless farms are also; that a law thus discriminating against mines, which are considered real estate, would unquestionably be declared unconstitutional by the higher courts. Of course, every one knows that no legislator, no politician would dare to enact a law taxing the farmer on the amount of wheat and number of pumpkins he raises.

It would therefore seem that eastern Oregon is unfortunate in the matter of the character of its mine owners. They are for the most part nonresidents. They have no interest in the upbuilding of the country; they have good things themselves, want more of the same and really prefer that the world should not know of the unequalled riches of the gold fields of eastern Oregon. That is merely one phase of universal human selfishness.

Mr. Wing, in charge of the United States assay office at Seattle, has been detailed to ascertain the precious metal output of Oregon, and he has been working on the problem for more than a year. While in Sumpter a couple of months since, he informed the writer that he had perfected a system, through the cooperation of assay offices, banks, smelters and the mint, whereby he would be able to make an accurate estimate for the year 1902—which will surely open the eyes of the mining world.

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