

POOR MAN'S QUARTZ MILL.

PLEA FOR AN OLD STYLE GOLD SAVER.

The Antiquated Arastra Has Been the Means of Developing Many A Gold District—Eastern Oregon as Well as Others—Why Not Encourage Its Use—It Creates Independence Among Prospectors.

With the number of healthy prospects containing more or less free gold, owned by prospectors, it is a wonder that there are not more Arastras in operation during the summer season on the gold belts of eastern Oregon.

True, the Arastra is a primitive method of separating the valuable from the waste, and it is a slow process of reducing ores, but never the less, it has many advantages for the claim owner of limited means and should be used more by that class of miners.

Many wealthy mining men of today made their start and were enabled to hold and develop their property on account of using a little mechanical ingenuity and having the patience to remain independent by grinding out sufficient money to keep them going by means of the simple and cheap contrivance called an Arastra.

No doubt the people of the Sumpter district rarely give credit to the old style Arastra as being the means which really caused the mineral wealth in quartz of this section to be known. It is scarcely necessary to cite the Red Boy as an example. Had the owners of that property not used this simple process, what would be known of the Sumpter gold fields today?

It should not be presumed that if a prospector commences to recover the free gold in his ore by this means that he will always continue to do so. Far from it! the Arastra serves its purpose in its time. It makes the prospector more independent. It enables him to more thoroughly develop his claims, and no matter if his returns are small, it causes his holdings to become a producer, and a productive mine or claim is much more liable to attract the attention of a capitalist than a non productive one.

No doubt there are scores of ambitious prospectors and claim owners now wearily passing away the winter months in some town or in a lonely cabin, who would be industriously developing their claims and taking out ore for the next seasons run, were the advantages of having an Arastra more fully impressed on their minds.

Many a man would gradually rise to wealth and affluence who otherwise is compelled to part with his finds piecemeal so as to subsist or procure the necessary supplies to proceed with the development of his claims.

To erect one of these necessary adjuncts to a poor man's claim requires no great knowledge of mechanics or training in any branch of metallurgical science. Knowing how to use a few edge tools and perform a little black smithing is about all that is required.

Should the person desiring to build an Arastra, not possess these requirements, it will not be a very huge outlay if he is compelled to hire it done by one or more competent persons. After a site is chosen and the materials are on the ground, it does not take long to complete the plant.

In a well timbered country like this,

about everything except the iron, needed in the building of an Arastra is on the ground or in the immediate locality. Lumber for the bottoms and sides of the tubs, timbers for shafting and a base for the water wheel and the necessary boards and braces for the power wheel, is about all that is needed.

Rock for drags and for bedding, in the tubs, can usually be had without going to any great distance. And should any heavy machinery be required, the Arastra man goes to the nearest rock pile and gets it, instead of sending a long distance for expensive castings as he would have to if he purchased a stamp mill on credit.

Although the Arastra is an old, old institution, probably the first idea of such a means of reducing ores originated in the mind of a Mexican Peoe, yet in its way, it is the greatest free gold saver ever devised by mankind.

Men of scientific training and men of varied and extensive experience in gold mining and gold milling, when they wish to save a high percentage of value, either use the crude Arastra or the same idea in some other form. The real reason for this is easily explained. When you have your gold confined in a tub, you need not let go of it until you have it.

Were the prospector, the claim owner of little or no means, and in many cases the larger mine owner, who has a reasonable amount of funds, to grind out their free gold by this means, probably there would be fewer failures while developing a gold district.

It is not presumed that an Arastra will save the values in base or rebellious ores, or concentrate the valuable particles making a product for the smelter. The Arastra's work is done when the metallic gold is recovered, and the tailings from it can be reserved for future treatment.

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