

## PROGRESS IN OREGON MINES.

### ADVANCEMENT IN THE INDUSTRY DURING THE PAST YEAR.

**Comprehensive Review of Progress Made in Oregon Mines—the Quizzical Doubt as to Their Value and Lasting Qualities Has Been Removed.—Gold the Predominating Metal in this State.**

It was impossible in the review we gave last week of the progress shown in the mining industry throughout the country to do adequate justice to any particular field. We have from time to time referred to the excellent showing the mines of Oregon were making, and the record for 1902 shows that our predictions were justified.

According to the government estimate Oregon yielded in 1902 \$1,800,455 in gold, and \$63,600 worth of silver. The accuracy of this estimate is questioned by men familiar with mining in the northwest. Some place the gold output for 1902 at \$1,900,000, dividing it as follows: \$3,000,000 from the mines of eastern Oregon, chiefly from the district tributary to Baker City: \$1,580,000 from Jackson and Josephine counties, in southern Oregon; \$250,000 from the Bohemia district, and the remaining \$70,000 from Blue River, the Santiam and the Trout Creek district, in Crook county.

The actual output probably lies somewhere between these two estimates, but in any event it is evident there has been a large increase over recent years. Several States show a much larger output, but mining in these states has about reached its highest stage of development, while in Oregon it is the promise of the future that is noteworthy. The industry has been steeper than ever before. Much new capital has been invested and the work of development has gone forward systematically and with confidence.

The trend of operation has been to gain depth—to ascertain positively how permanent Oregon ledges are. This has characterized most of the mining development of the year. And it is regarded as of the highest importance to the mining industry of the State that the ledges bear deep exploitation. The ore grows base with depth, as is to be expected, but this fact tends to establish the permanence of the deposits, as distinguished from pockets and other forms of gold-bearing strata that are soon worked out. It is gold mining that is here spoken of, gold being the chief mineral of the State and the basis of its present mining industry.

The chief mining operations of recent years have been upon quartz ledges. Many of the old placers have been worked out and abandoned, though in some instances it is found that modern methods will make placers pay handsomely where they could not be made profitable in pioneer times with the imperfect facilities then available. This fact has led to the rehabilitation of many old placers, chiefly in southern Oregon, but also to an extent in the eastern part of the State, and a large part of the gold production of the State for the past year has come from those sources. Some dredging has been done on Snake River bars, but with indifferent results, it is said.

The quartz ledges are looked upon as holding the great industry, however, and the timidity that at first characterized attempts to prove the worth of the

veins, lodes and shoots has largely disappeared, and confidence has taken the place of quizzical doubt.

There is not a county in Oregon that does not possess minerals in the native state. Gold, silver, copper, coal and iron are the most common and most important of these. No iron has been mined in the State in the past year. In some of the mines the copper is the primary product; in more of them gold is chief.

It is in eastern Oregon, of which Sumpter and Baker City are the centers, that the most striking developments have been seen. Improvements have mostly consisted of deep sinking, and extension of tunnels, the building of better roads and the installation of new machinery in suitable buildings. A large number of well-worked prospects have been brought to a better state of development and placed on the list of producing mines. Among these new properties are the Phoenix, Gem, Don Juan, Black Hawk and Blue Bird, the Red Boy, Bonanza, North Pole, Columbia, and others have worked activity with better results than ever before.

The Baisley-Elkhorn mine which has been a steady producer for several years, has been shut down for the past year on account of litigation, but it has now been sold, and, together with the Robbins-Elkhorn, which adjoins it, is being made ready for extensive development work in the near future. When these two properties are opened by the long tunnel now proposed it will be the largest and most extensive gold mine in the State. The Golconda mine, in Cracker Creek district, which was shut down last year pending a settlement with the owners and lessees, has been sold and is now being worked with a larger force of men and on a larger scale than ever before. The Golconda adjoins the Columbia, which is one of the reliable producers of the camp, and bids fair, by reason of the rich strikes made in the past year, to come near being the best mine in the State.

The past year has witnessed great advancement in the mineral industry of southern Oregon. From a "pocket and blanket" era the mines of this section of the State have entered a permanent and substantial business epoch. Though the pioneer mining section of the State, southern Oregon has been the slowest in development, owing to its reputation for being a "pocket" country. But capitalists have begun to see and find something more than surface mines in Josephine and Jackson counties, and have invested more heavily in the section in the last year than ever before. The success of those who have fearlessly sunk their shafts deep has led others to follow suit, and as a result the southern Oregon districts have a number of well developed and paying quartz mines. The future success of Josephine county mining is bound up in its quartz ledges, for there must come a time when the placer mines now being worked will be washed off. This in turn will depend upon the attitude of capital toward the district, for, as a matter of fact, few of the southern Oregon miners who have good quartz claims have the means adequately to develop and equip them.

There are three times as many paying mines in Josephine county at this time as there were one year ago, a fact that proves that the quartz ledges of the district are receiving much attention from men of means. Eastern capital has done this work.

In Josephine county the Eureka mine, operating a 10-stamp mill and full equipment, has been brought from a hole in the ground to a billion producer of \$25,000 to \$30,000 in the past year. The Gopher is operating a 5-stamp mill, and was doing nothing last year. The mine has increased its equipment from

a 15 to a 20-stamp mill, and has added a cyanide plant and other modern equipments. The Gold Bug has added a large cyanide plant to support its 5-stamp mill.

In hydraulic mining the greatest advancement of the past year for Josephine county is represented in the enterprise of the Golden Drift Mining Company, which is damming Rouge River, three miles above Grant's Pass. From there power will be utilized in operating mammoth pumps and forcing water to the Dry Diggings, where five or six giants can be kept in constant operation, thus overcoming the embarrassment of a long delay and suspension of work during the dry season. Irrigation and power for manufacturing purposes are also to be incidents of this great enterprise, which will be completed the coming spring and summer.

Fourteen miles of the Oregon & South-eastern Railway have been completed, reaching out toward the great Bohemia mining region; four miles are ready for the ties, and an equipment of two locomotives and ten flat cars are doing service on the road.

The mines of the Bohemia mining district have been visited by many large mine owners the past season. Several companies have been able to dispose of the treasury stock in the east, and more work has been accomplished in this district than ever before. It is strange, but true, that a district so conveniently located has been so long undeveloped. No district in the world has more surface encouragement, nor can one be found where less money is required for development. There is not a ledge but can be explored by deep tunnels, scarcely a claim that has not enough timber for mining purposes, and there is abundance of water in all the streams. There is free gold at the surface, with sulphides in deeper levels, and every indication leads to permanency of values.

F. J. Hard, secretary of the Oregon Mining Stock Exchange, has been most

prominent in attracting attention to this district. His companies, the Oregon-Colorado, Vesuvius and Riverside, are proving his judgement in selection, and the large amount of work he is having done proves his faith in the district, which is reached by stage from Cottage Grove, 140 miles south of Portland, on the Southern Pacific Railroad.—America Mining News.

If in want of clothing, see Neill Mercantile company.

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

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