

PROBLEM OF ORE TRANSPORTATION

SHIPPING FACILITIES TO SMELTER SHOULD BE BETTER.

Thousands of Tons of Base Ores Will be Required at Smelting Works—Difference in Cost of Railway and Wagon Haulage Would Leave Handsome Profit to Producer.

One of the problems that will soon be confronting the people of the Sumpter district is that of transportation.

It will not be many weeks until the Oregon Smelting and Refining company will be ready to receive and sample ores.

Naturally this concern will have their sampling mill in operation for some time before the smelting furnace is blown in, and the reduction to matte begins. This will be necessary for several reasons. A large quantity of ore and fluxing material will have to be on hand so the furnace can make a successful run.

Then again, from a metallurgical standpoint, the chemical composition of these ores, fluxes, and even fuel, must be known so as to make up the proper "charge" for smelting.

Thus transportation will be one of the first considerations to be looked after when this extensive plant is completed.

The transportation question presents entirely different phases in different mining camps. Where first class means are required in one mining section, in another progress can be made by using very primitive methods.

To illustrate: base metal mines furnish tonnage both ways for a railway, as supplies have to be brought in, and the product of the mines hauled to some distant point for reduction. Free gold mines, as a rule, furnish a limited quantity of incoming freight, and no matter if the output be millions of dollars monthly, it could be transported to the outside world by pack train.

Hence railways do not push their lines or spurs from the main trunk into free gold regions with the alacrity that they do into mining sections which produce the baser metals, such as copper, lead, etc., and which usually carry more or less silver values.

By the completion of the Oregon Smelting and Refining company's plant at Sumpter, a new era in the important question of transportation is opening up. Base ores and concentrates must be handled at less cost to make many properties profitable. The difference between transporting by rail and by wagon is sufficient in itself to create huge dividends for mining companies or individual mine owners.

The writer has been in many mining camps where the change from teams to freight car has been made, and noted a wonderful change in the business of the country when the locomotive succeeded the animals in transferring ores from one point to another.

For instance; in the last camp, the transportation of silver-lead ore by wagon or sleigh, averaged \$15 per ton. When a railway was completed, the charge for the same distance was \$3 per ton, and the railway made money.

There can be no doubt but that thousands of tons of smelting ores, carrying gold and copper, can be mined, shipped and reduced at the smelting works in Sumpter, and on which a handsome margin of profit would be made with railway connection, but the mining, shipment and treatment of this

same ore would be prohibitive should the producer be compelled to depend on wagon transportation.

There is a reasonable certainty that a railway line will be built from Sumpter into the Cracker Creek section, and possibly on to the Cable Cove, this year. It is said that at first the motive power will be steam, but later on electricity will be substituted. Whether this line—for which a charter has been granted,—is financed or not, the public is not made aware.

There is no question of doubt but that such a line would be a big paying one, as the freight and passenger traffic over the county road is enormous, and would be wonderfully augmented were the facilities of travel and transportation bettered.

TWO STATES NOT GIVEN CREDIT

A Thorough Canvass of Each Mining District is Suggested.

After giving the production of precious metals for the Pacific coast. The Investors Journal has this to say regarding the noble metal output in Oregon.

While in some districts the estimate of the director of the mint is nearly correct, as he has had every possible facility for arriving at the output, his figures for Washington and Oregon are far from being correct.

A great deal of bullion is shipped from both of these states which is never credited to them and one mine in Oregon has produced more gold in the past year than has been credited to the entire state.

There is only one absolutely sure way of arriving at the correct output of a district and that is, to get returns from each producing mine. This the director of the mint cannot do and the task would be a very difficult one as many mine owners are averse to giving out any statement about the output of their mines. However, a thorough canvass of each district would result in obtaining pretty accurate estimates.

Was It Hot Air or Cold Air?

A curious placer washing machine has been uncovered in one of the Prudential company's workings near Nogales, Arizona. The mine was worked several hundreds years ago by the Spaniards, and the apparatus appears to have been used for the purpose of separating the gold in the ore by means of an air blast from a crude sort of a bellows, after the ore had been thoroughly crushed.

In Addition to Bank Account.

An ingenious German chemist has figured out that the average human being is worth \$18,300 from a chemical standpoint. He bases his calculations on the fact that the human body contains three pounds and thirteen ounces of calcium, and calcium is quoted at \$300 an ounce. Since this is the case some of the men who walk our streets are worth just about \$18,300 more than anybody ever though they were.

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