

# MAJ. BONTA WILL RETURN TO OREGON APRIL 15.

## When Work Will be Rushed on His Railroad to The John Day Country.

E. A. Hutchins, agent of Major Bonta in his mining and railway enterprises, passed through this morning en route to the Oregon Wonder and Will Cleaver groups, to measure up the contract work and pay off the men.

Mr. Hutchins will go on to Mount Rastus to look after the work at the Bonta property there. Development has been prosecuted on the Old Hutch group all winter and over 200 feet of tunnel work completed. In driving this distance three blind ledges were cut, one of which measured four and the other two six feet in width, and all carrying good values.

Mr. Hutchins expects Major Bonta back from the east by the middle of April. It is definitely known, he says, that the bonds have all been sold for the railroad and every thing arranged satisfactorily, as far as financing the proposition, is concerned. It is Major Bonta's intention to return just as soon as the weather will permit the commencement of general work on the proposed line.

It is evidently the knowledge that Major Bonta is going to build his railroad into the John Day valley from Baker City that has stirred up the Sumpter Valley people. The management of that road is telling its business to the newspapers now for the first time in its history, telling them about building all kinds of lines over into the Isolated Empire. Hitherto it has always been a case of the public, especially the newspapers, be damned. Now, that a fight for traffic in the not very distant future is comparatively a sure thing, the Sumpter Valley is taking the public into its confidence and telling what it proposes to do towards building up the country.

In this connection, The Miner was informed a few days since that the grade beyond Whitney is of standard gauge and the intention is to make of such the whole road at no distant date. The Sumpter Valley is evidently preparing for competition, which has been alleged to be the life of trade—and has sometimes been known to be its death.

### SCHEME TO IRRIGATE OVER 50,000 ACRES.

A dam 100 feet high for a reservoir of sufficient capacity to cover 5,000 acres of land is one of the newest irrigation enterprises in the Inland Empire. The dam will be placed in the canyon of the Owyhee river, about eighteen miles from Ontario, and three and one-half miles from the mouth of Jordan creek. Civil Engineer C. C. Stephenson, of Boise, and his crew of surveyors have just completed surveying the site for the dam, and will at once make the survey for the canal, which will extend from the big reservoir to the Malheur river below Ontario, covering all the bench land not reached by the Nevada and Owyhee canals.

It is possible this high-line canal may be extended across the Malheur river to Dead Ox Flat, opposite Weiser. The dam as surveyed will be 150 feet long and 100 feet high, and it is possible to build a dam at that point 200 feet high, but the 100 foot dam will make a reservoir of sufficient capacity to irrigate all the arid lands below.

Mr. Stephenson is not making public who the capitalists are behind the enterprise, but it is learned that the checks issued in payment of services were from prominent business men of Boise.

### HAD ROUGH PASSAGE FROM SUSANVILLE.

Billy Stewart, the head repairman of the telephone company, returned from Susanville last night, after a rough passage. Near Whitney, while crossing a small ravine which the melting snow had filled with water, the horses went through, breaking the harness and leaving the sleigh and Mr. Stewart stranded. There was nothing left to do but to wade out and pull the vehicle. This he did in four or five feet of water.

Mr. Stewart says the snow is almost gone from the roads out the Susanville way, and sleighing is difficult. He saw several dead horses in the vicinity of Susanville, and there is much talk about the suffering among stock.

### OREGON'S ORE EXHIBIT SHIPPED TO ST. LOUIS

Tomorrow Fred R. Mellis will ship to St. Louis the Oregon ore exhibit, which will be placed in the world's fair.

The shipment will occupy a full car and will represent an intrinsic value close to one hundred thousand dollars. That is, that amount of

gold is contained in the exhibit in the shape of nuggets, gold quartz and high grade specimens.

In the shipment is included the famous Mellis cabinets, which have been admired by millions of people, having been exhibited at Buffalo, Charleston, Spokane and other expositions. These cabinets could not be duplicated, and for that reason are worth a fabulous figure.

Mellis' own private exhibit has been enhanced by the addition of scores of tons of ore specimens from all the mines of Oregon, and by gold nuggets, precious ore specimens, bottles of valuable concentrates, assay buttons and solid gold bars.

The exhibit gathered by Mr. Mellis is expected to eclipse anything in that line shown at the world's fair.

It will result in a magnificent advertisement of the mineral resources of Baker county — Herald.

### LANDS WITHDRAWN FROM RESERVE

A special dispatch from Washington, to the Portland Journal, dated the 14th instant says: Chief Forester Hon. Gifford Pinchot has decided that the following lands, included within the withdrawals for the proposed Blue Mountain forest reserve, shall be excluded from such reserve in fixing the final boundaries of the same:

All of sections 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 35 and 36 in township 10 south, range 35 1/2 east; also all of township 11 south, range 35 east; also sections 13, 14, 24, 25 and 36, township 11 south, range 34 east; also sections 1, 2 and 12, township 12 south, range 35 east, Willamette Meridian.

Mr. Pinchot further states in his communication, which is addressed to Senator Mitchell, that the remaining lands in township 11 south, range 35 1/2 east, and in township 12 south, range 35 and 35 1/2 east, are practically all held by the federal government, and are covered with merchantable timber and well suited for the purposes of a forest reserve.

Mr. Pinchot makes a further statement as follows: "I wish to emphasize very strongly the fact that in case this reserve is created, the merchantable timber will be sold upon application, and that the policy of the government will be to encourage in every way the general development of the region."

The lands withdrawn from the reservation lie along the proposed line of railway from Sumpter to Burns.

### WILD DUCKS WEIGHTED DOWN WITH GOLD NUGGETS

One of the greatest mining excitements ever occurring near Salt Lake is now on.

A great number of wild ducks have been found dead near Basin City, and investigation proves that the fowls had been killed by eating small gold nuggets which lodged in their crops.

Soon after the discovery dozens of citizens began to hunt ducks. The new scheme of mining was profitable to more than one of the hunters. Dr. Walker, of Hyattville found a nugget in a duck's crop worth \$11.85.

Other fuds were made, and the gold fever is on. The nuggets swallowed by the birds, were picked up on the shore of Paint Rock creek. Prospectors are already on the ground staking claims. — Exchange.

### WETAHER MAN HAS IT IN FOR HIM.

#### Dr. Walters Bunked Into All Kinds of Inclemency On Trip South.

Dr. F. A. Walters, of Stevens' Point, Wisconsin, who returned the other day from a southern Oregon and California trip to look after his mining interests here before going east, inclines to the belief that the weather man has it in for him. When he arrived in Sumpter a few weeks ago, the worst snow storm of the season was raging. With skis and webs he braved the inclemency of the weather and made a journey to the Storm King. After spending several days here he went to southern Oregon, where he went against the worst rain storm in history. In fact, he says the rainfall in a couple of months there amounted to more than it usually does for the entire year. To get away from this beastly brand of weather, he tried Frisco, and bumped into the heavy storm about which the papers were full a short time ago. He concludes that after all the Sumpter variety is the best he has struck on the Pacific coast.

Dr. Walters' advices from home state that Wisconsin has experienced the coldest weather within the memory of man. Strange birds hitherto unknown in that region are plentiful, supposed to have been driven there by the intense cold further north.

Dr. Walters is interested in the Enterprise Mining company, in southern Oregon, which is allied with the Advance and Forest companies in Sumpter, and which controls several properties there. He says things are looking good and extensive work and will be done the coming season. On his return he will arrange to carry on continuous development at the several properties in which his companies are interested.

#### Mixed Up in Wade Failure.

J. S. Hughes, one of the owners of the Standard, returned this morning from a business trip to Penleton, and left this afternoon for Quartzburg. Mr. Hughes was slightly mixed up in the Wade failure, Mr. Wade having had an option on his Standard stock, and his mission to Penleton was to adjust matters.

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