

The Sumpter Miner

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ALWAYS IN ADVANCE.

The output of gold from the Transvaal is increasing wonderfully. According to a report made at a London meeting of the officers of the Standard Bank of South Africa, the production of the mines of Great Britain's new South African colony for 1903 was nearly \$62,500,000. This was almost double the amount for 1902. The output is increasing month by month and indications are that the output for 1904 will reach \$75,000,000, which is approximately the high figure touched before the Boer war broke out.

One of Portland's commercial organizations has employed a professional boomer to boost that town and tributary country. He is reported to be very enthusiastic over the possibilities. The gentleman has been operating in Texas and more recently in New Orleans, going to Portland from that city. It will be an interesting study to watch his enthusiasm cool off and turn into disgust, as he becomes familiar and finally acquainted with the Portland and Oregon spirit, which could be graphically represented by a cur in a cow stable.

Philip S. Bates, publisher of the Pacific Miner, writes The Sumpter Miner that in a recent editorial this paper made a mistake, in confusing the New York Mining Stock Exchange with the Wall Street Mining and Stock Exchange. He says the latter is a farce, while the former, to which Wheeler & Co. and others reputable brokers belong and which was commended by his paper, is all right. The Miner hopes that it is, will be glad to learn that the difference between the two is in methods, as well as in name, and cheerfully makes this statement in justice to the Pacific Miner.

A job lot of unnamed bacilli from the plague sufferers in India has been lost somewhere between St. Paul and Chicago. A London scientist was returning from India with the microbes, which were destined for the learned men of England and Germany in their researches regarding the plague, but some way or other he let the bunch escape him. Great consternation now prevails along the route from St. Paul to Chicago. It was first talked of putting the Chicago police force on the track of the bugs, but when it was shown that this force would have difficulty in shadowing a load of hay across town, this plan was abandoned. The bugs are still at large.

There was \$483,973,844 excess of exports for the twelve months ending April last, according to the statement of the total values of imports and exports of the United States, as set forth by the department of commerce and labor by its bureau of statistics. During the preceding period of similar length the excess was \$402,962,792. This shows an

increase of \$89,551,402 for the first ten months of the present fiscal year.

During this period there entered free of duty merchandise to the value of \$380,756,494. The dutiable merchandise was valued at \$448,246,420, making a total importation of \$829,002,914. The exports during the same ten months amounted to \$1,217,859,235. The exports for the month of December were most valuable, the amount being \$174,819,566. August was the poorest month of the year, with only \$89,446,457. The exports of the past month were valued greater than those of April, 1903, or 1902; but less than those of 1900 or 1901.

It is unpleasant to learn, says the Boston Transcript, from Bishop Satterlee that the "the tenor of life in Washington has become less natural, social conditions have changed, and for the worse." In the old days whatever faults Washington may have had, it cultivated a wholesome and even amusing democracy. Every man was better than every other, because no one knew when next he might be on top, and to whoever had the requisite clothes—even the clothes were not absolutely essential—the national free lunch route lay open day and evening through the houses of political and social notables. But lately all that has been changing. The beginning of the end appeared several years ago, at a certain memorable dance in a private house, when the foreign potentates and a few American exclusives were roped off from the herd of everyday folks in evening clothes. Since then, facilis descensus Europae.

Black diamonds, or borts, such as are used for the cutting edges in diamond drills, have of recent years advanced materially in cost, the present marked quotations being about \$55 per karat, as against \$25 ten years ago, says the Mining World. The greatly enhanced value of these wonderful stones is due to two causes, first, the greatly extended use of the diamond drill; second, that the carbons are becoming seemingly scarce, the supply being inadequate to the demand. Diamond drill manufacturers keep in supply upwards of several thousand dollars worth of borts, which are handled with excessive care. The cost of drilling would be greatly reduced were a much less expensive article substituted for the diamond, but nature was exceedingly sparing in its manufacture of the hardest known substance, diamonds, and even to the ordinary black diamond, or bort, unless as a gem, but in commercial uses incomparable. The United States produces no black diamonds, the stones that we use being purchased in Paris or London, and which are of Brazilian or South African origin. Borts are massive forms of the diamond, having little or no cleavage. The true bort occurs in rounded form, made up of a confused aggregate of crystals, and is even slightly harder than the true gem stone. The ordinary size used for drilling weighs from one-half to one carat, and in special uses stones running up to six carats are used. The crowns of large drills ten inches in diameter contain at times as high as \$7,500 worth of borts.

The Leadville Herald-Times publishes a sensible article on the treatment of low grade ores, that is of especial interest to eastern Oregon operators. Here, though there are some immense deposits of from three to five dollar rock, no one has

ever tried to extract the values. Within a mile of Sumpter there is a 35-foot ledge that carries higher values than are found in the Home stake. The Herald-Democrat says in part:

It is a significant fact that the great metal mines of the world, with possibly a few noted exceptions, are deriving their profits from ores which would be called low grade. Colorado seems to be somewhat backward in the treatment of extremely low grades, only a comparatively few mines being so advantageously situated as to be able to obtain the best results. Low grade gold ores, susceptible to the cyanide treatment, offer the greatest opportunity for making a good profit, but the ore must exist in sufficiently large quantities to redner the installation of large plants profitable.

In the earlier years of mining in Colorado the "process man" was in abundant evidence. Monuments to his genius and impracticability are to be met with in every gulch, in the shape of decaying mills and the wrecks of machinery. On the strength of a tunnel and a few assays the promoter was certain there was a "mountain of ore" in sight and in those days eastern capital was readily available for western mining enterprise. We have no doubt that millions of dollars was wasted in Colorado in these profitless mill ventures—an enormous plant with no ore, or ample ore and the wrong process.

Baker county politics hinges on the repeal of the Eddy corporation tax law. That law is particularly obnoxious to the mining companies looking for get-rich-quick spots in Oregon. They say it prevents development, when the facts are it only prevents wild cat schemes. The people are satisfied with the Eddy law. It taxes the transient corporations in proportion to the privileges they enjoy from the state. The people of Baker county do not desire the repeal of the law. It is the mining promoters alone, who desire it. Not one bona fide corporation in Oregon has objected to the law.—East Oregonian.

The Pendleton paper displays, not only ignorance, but malice, in printing such stuff as this, which it persists in doing from time to time. It also furnishes a key to the character of the mind that writes it: a narrow one warped by prejudice, stored with superficial knowledge and a false conception of its own importance and infallibility.

The truth about this matter is that the wildcatters don't care a snap for the Eddy law. If they chance to be selling much stock, they pay the license and charge it to their heavy expense account, a few hundred one way or another making no difference with them, it being a matter of little concern as to how much goes into the development. If stock sale are not active they simply don't pay the tax. The interest of the stockholders do not keep them awake nights. The people on whom this tax falls as a burden, are those who believe they own a good prospect, are not willing to pay out sixty per cent of the treasury as a commission on sales, and therefore sell in small quantities to friends, or else trade for grub and powder, doing the work at the mines themselves. These are the ones who can't afford to pay the tax, and are affected adversely directly. Of course, the spirit of the law, displaying state antagonism to mining, frightens timid capital and has injured the industry generally.

Here in Baker county, where people see every day this evil effect, whether they are engaged in mining or not, the voters are unanimously opposed to the iniquitous measure and are clamoring for its repeal.

The western atmosphere seems to be particularly favorable to the development of the human faculty known as "knocking," says the Mining World. No man that has any connection with western mining or promotion enterprises has escaped the annoying and sometimes disastrous consequences of this anomaly. One would naturally think that the local residents would be interested in boosting and booming the whole district for selfish reasons, if not on grounds of local patriotism. If the management does not conduct the mine exactly to suit the local "experts" and "wise men", a howl is sent up and goes forth to all the world. If the management is progressive and has new ideas the local critics condemn them without a hearing. These local "experts" all know just how to run the other fellow's business, and if their gratuitous advice is not accepted on the spot they proclaim that the management of the property is incompetent or perhaps dishonest. It is very seldom that mining managers and promoters look for any local support, and if they do get it, it is accepted with so many conditions and "ifs" and "ands" that it costs more than it is worth. We are not in sympathy with the "rich man's son," or the proverbial "black sheep" who is sent into the west to develop mining properties with money sent unquestioned from eastern friends and connections. This class is certain to make costly mistakes and many resulting failures.

If it were only the business of those who are foolish enough to put their money in such unwise hands we would have nothing to say. These incompetents are an injury to any mining district. But not all men that "come out from the east" are incompetent. Frequently some who have attained success in other, perhaps allied lines, who have technical, mechanical and financial ability, and who are competent to meet new problems and solve them with a minimum of errors, go to manage and develop western properties. These men are continually harassed by the criticising, carping and maliciousness of local criticisms, and they are indeed fortunate if their company is so financed and organized that they are above harm from this back fire. We desire to say, in conclusion, that the local communities are directly interested in the development and should encourage rather than criticize them.

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