

SUPERSTITION IN MINING MATTERS

In China the Necromancer Controls Operations, Annoying Engineers.

We have heard of individuals who were guided to the discovery of rich veins or advised in their investment of capital in profitable mines by dreams, spiritualists or some other form of that mysticism under which modern men and women cover their ignorance of the things outside their current philosophy. But they are rarely spoken with boldness, they require an apologetic tone, and the man of affairs is prone to put them aside among the absurdities which fringe the domain of pseudo science. In the Orient, however, they do these things better, and in China, a country now interesting as a field for future mining activity, it is a fact that the necromancer and the mining engineer find themselves face to face.

In China the religious superstitions of the people are an organized force and all mining operations have to take count of it. The spirits of fire and water, which are especially dreaded, are expressed by the superstition of Fang Shui, whose guardians are the necromancers. An American mining engineer who had charge of mines controlled by Li Hung Chang was compelled to cease underground work because the provincial necromancer reported to Peking that the mining operations disturbed the slumbers of the dragon that lies coiled around the Imperial tombs. A douceur of fifty taels would have "fixed" this gentleman, but the Chinese director overlooked this detail and so all work ceased. In this way the necromancers have the vote, for, though large sums may have been spent on a mine, the dictum of one of them can stop everything; they appeal direct to the throne, over the heads of the viceroy and military governor. This unpleasant custom finds no recognition in the regulations covering foreign concessions, but it exists as an unknown quantity capable of causing extreme annoyance, if not worse.

In Korea similar superstitions exist, as is indicated in a humorous manner by the incident related by another American engineer elsewhere in this issue. At one of the mines of the British and Korean concessions, so many accidents had occurred that the native overseers petitioned the manager to engage the services of a sorceress who could preside at a feast to be prepared for the devils that were held responsible. —Engineering and Mining Journal.

Treasure Wreck Located.

A Port Townsend dispatch says: Advice has been received from Alaska that the Finch Wrecking company has, after three unsuccessful attempts, succeeded in locating the wreck of the British steamer Islander, which sank in Lynn canal four years ago, while returning from Skagway to Seattle with a large number of Klondikers and much treasure.

The information was brought by passengers of the steamer Seattle, who say the diver assert that no

rock exists in the vicinity of the wreck, and that beyond doubt the vessel met her doom through a collision with a submerged iceberg. Arrangements are progressing to raise the wreck which, if successful, will amply reimburse Captain Finch for his efforts, as over \$200,000 in gold dust is known to have been in the purser's safe when the accident occurred."

WATER SEEKS ITS LEVEL

Early this morning some of the Water company men went out on the conduit to see how the siphon pipe line was working. Something of a panic was created when it was discovered that not a drop of water was flowing through the pipe, and the thought forced itself into the minds of the men that some error had been made in running the levels. They hastened over to the other end and found the water overflowing in a deluge. The mouth of the pipe was stopped up with leaves and mud. When the obstruction was removed the trouble was also removed and the panic ended.

Hearing this incident spoken of, one of Sumpter's pioneers was reminded of an early day settler's irrigation ditch, that wouldn't irrigate. He lived near McEwen, spent \$3,000 in constructing his ditch and when finished found that the water would not flow through it. He called in a neighbor, who was considered quite a competent amateur hydraulic expert, to investigate the defect. In examining the water level used in laying out the route of the ditch, which was a primitive, home made instrument, the expert, in questioning the owner regarding its use, discovered that he had used it up side down and had run the ditch up hill.

The narrator then proceeded to relate that this man was the original hero of the old story, which alleges that in sawing off the limb of a tree, he sat on the limb and sawed it between himself and the trunk.

Battle on Sheep Range.

About 9:30 o'clock Thursday night five or six men, masked and armed, crept up to the sheep camp of Lee Brothers, on Baldy mountain, and commenced firing into the band of sheep. The herder, who was well armed, from behind a tree returned the fire until his ammunition was fully exhausted. He shot in the direction of the flashes of light from his assailants, but in the dark could find no more ammunition, and then broke camp and hurried to Baker City to give the alarm. He arrived here at an early hour yesterday morning, and in his shirt sleeves, with his empty gun across his back, found Miles Lee at his home and told him his story. Yesterday morning Mr. Lee sent two men into the camp to ascertain the amount of damage done. The herder thinks he killed one or two of the attacking party, and it is estimated that \$400 or \$500 worth of sheep were killed. At the present writing Mr. Miles' special posse have not returned. It seems that there is a tacit understanding between sheep and cattle men to keep within certain bounds, and when these limits are overruled little fuss is made about an affair of this kind. —Democrat.

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MORNING SALE WAS AD- JOURNED TILL JULY 23

The sale of the Morning mine to satisfy the judgment of Keep & Company set at Canyon City today was adjourned till July 23, the date fixed for the Holland sale. Mayor McColloch, attorney for the owners, is now in Canyon City.

T. W. Davidson and A. B. Browne left this afternoon presumably on a mining trip to Idaho, though there are strong suspicions that they have something big on which they do not care to discuss. Mr. Davidson was asked before getting on the train if his company had given up negotiations for the Morning mine. He replied that it is absolutely impossible for any one to do business with these people and the only way out now was for the courts to settle the matter, which will be done in November. However, he said his company would be pleased for the owners to get some one else developing at once, as it is reported that they are carrying on negotiations with three or four other parties all at the same time.

MEETING OF FOREST DIRECTORS YESTERDAY

A directors' meeting of the Forest Mining company was held yesterday afternoon in the company's offices over the Bank of Sumpter. It was decided to start work by contract on a small scale at once, and resume operations more extensively about October 1.

Thomas Costello, manager of the company, was granted a leave of absence until October, when more extensive work will be inaugurated. Mr. Costello will leave in a short time on a mining trip through Idaho.

SCENERY EQUALS THE YELLOWSTONE

R. M. Hall, advertising agent of the O. R. & N., and S. Glen Andrus, railroad editor of the Chicago Record-Herald, returned today from Bourne, where they visited the big Cracker Creek mines, gathering data for the mining writteup of eastern Oregon. Mr. Andrus was greatly impressed with the general mining activity of the district and the beautiful scenery. He says the scenery all but equals that of the Yellowstone Park.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrus and son, and Mr. Hall left this afternoon to visit the Grande Ronde valley, and from there will take in other points of interest in the Northwest.

Bright Future for Mining.

The immediate future of the mining industry was never brighter than at the present time. This is true of all sections of the west. The vast amount of development work carried on has been completed and new plants, which have been in process of erection for the past several months, are nearly finished. An immediate increase in tonnage will follow as a matter of course. This is especially true of Arizona, Utah and Colorado.

Southern Nevada, particularly Tonopah, awaits only the completion of the railroad, now within a few miles of its doors, to pour out its stream of wealth, which has been impeded by reason of lack of transportation facilities only. In Idaho the construction of new roads will permit the passage of ore which was not possible a short time since, and in Oregon the same condition prevails, while the Black Hills of South Dakota are increasing the output steadily, with not much noise or bluster. Central Wyoming will soon be the scene of greater activity, due to the construction of great reduction plants to handle the gold-bearing ores of the South Pass and Atlantic City country, and the probability that a railroad will be constructed to those points will quicken the industry in that section. Montana is developing new fields, as is told by the shipments of machinery to that state, while the work progressing in all these states, in new districts, with excellent results, bid fair to add new camps to the producing section of the west. —Ores & Metals.

DIRECTORS MEETING OF THE STANDARD

Zoeth Houser and J. S. Hughes, of the Standard, came in from the property last night. Mr. Houser, who has charge of the development work, is on his way to Pendleton, where a meeting of the directors will be held Monday to decide upon a compressor plant, and in all probability upon a concentrator.

Messrs. Houser and Hughes brought in with them a fine line of gold cobalt ore which is of characteristic richness, and will go several hundred dollars to the ton. Mr. Hughes is the original locator of the property, and still retains an interest.

RED BOY PEOPLE BACK FROM THE PROPERTY

J. G. English, of Danville, Illinois, one of the leading Red Boy stockholders, accompanied by Mrs. English, and E. J. Godfrey, former manager, returned from the property today and left for Baker City. Alexander Prussing and William Lummis, who went out with them, remained to visit Olive Lake where the latter is interested in mining property. They will be back tomorrow. Mr. English will leave for Chicago in a few days, where a directors meeting will be held and arrangements made for early operations.

Forest Mine Manager.

T. J. Costello, manager of the Forest Mining company, left this afternoon of Idaho on a leave of absence until October 1. Mr. Costello is making a mining trip in the interest of his company.

Arrangements have been made for carrying on contract work at the Forest's property in the Cable Cove district during his absence. It is stated that more extensive work will be inaugurated in October on his return.