

COVERS
THOROUGHLY
THE
GOLD FIELDS
of the
INLAND EMPIRE



THE SUMPTER MINER

EASTERN
INVESTORS
IN
OREGON MINES
Pay for
AND READ IT

SOME HARD-LUCK MINING STORIES

"It's a hard, cold, cruel world," murmured a tipsy prospector whom the barkeeper at the New Olympia saloon had refused a free drink this morning.

"Spial me none of your hard-luck stories," retorted the barkeep, acquainted with the fact that a tear-starting tale was forthcoming.

The prospector wiped the salt tears from his eyes and ambled out to test the sympathies of other barkeepers.

"Speaking of hard luck stories," began Colonel E. S. Topping, who happened to be at the cigar lighter—"the history of mining in the west is full of them. There is, of course, a brighter side. I do not need to relate to you the names of the men who have made millions upon millions in western mines. But when the sun shines brightest the shadows are deepest. I have a theory that luck is governed by the law of equilibrium. When Jim Jones strikes it rich, Tom Brown loses his grubstake. When Pete Cush opens an ore body forty feet wide, assaying five hundred to the ton, Monk Ecker beholds his vein pinching out to the thickness of a pick handle. It's a great game—this mining business—and because the stakes are big, with the percentage all on the side of the player—that is the reason some of us never resign our seats, today playing a stack of blues, tomorrow wagering a single white chip;—but always playing—year in and year out.

"There is always a bit of humor in these hard luck mining stories. A fellow may not see it at the time, but it's there. Later the humor may appeal, and instead of sadness over what might have been, there comes a feeling that what might have been will be. And that's another reason why we never quit the game—whether loser or winner. A healthy optimism is just as much a part of the mining man's make-up as is a knowledge of the exact difference and distinction between a decayed buffalo chip and a piece of bull quartz.

"In the last forty years I have heard enough hard luck mining stories to fill a book. Also, I have heard the other kind. Far be it from me to sit as a judge and say how greatly the members of the one overbalance the others; but this I shall say—that no doubt so long as I shall live I shall follow the mining game, because it's a square game, and the only game on earth wherein a man may begin with a button and cash in a cool million."

"I was over in the Black Hills during the early days of that camp," continued the colonel in a reminiscent tone, "and I was a star actor in a hardluck story. You know,

there is a sort of volcanic overflow covering the country around Lead. The lower strata of this overflow contains gold in paying quantities. Some snug fortunes were made in this sort of mining. I had about \$12,000 in ready cash, and with characteristic impetuosity took a bond on a string of claims which were a continuation of the ones where big money was being made. The late Senator Spencer, of Alabama, who was then in Jintown and Bismarck on that celebrated Louisiana lottery deal, was my side partner on the bond. I spent my \$12,000 and Spencer's \$12,000, but couldn't find the pay. We ran in debt for \$2,000, but still were unlucky. In disgust we threw up our bond and took up something else. In less than a year's time, other parties took up the work where we had left off and within fifteen feet struck it rich. They sold out at a clear profit of a quarter of a million dollars."

"Missing it by 15 feet seems to be the exact distance mentioned in all hard luck stories," spoke up George Day, veteran prospector, miner and gentleman gambler. "Frank Bucknum, of Sumpter, grubstaked a couple of prospectors a few years ago, and they located some claims in the Greenhorns. The end line of the last claim ran within fifteen feet of the spot where the Morning mine was afterward opened up.

"The colonel's hard luck story from the Black Hills reminds me of a similar yarn in which one of the same actors was a character. I refer to Senator Spencer, who was working on the Louisiana lottery deal in Dakota. Had that deal gone through a certain newspaper man would have been pensioned for life. And the real hard luck part of it is, that the same newspaper man is now in Sumpter. You all know him, so I don't need to mention his name. Had the lottery deal been successful, he would today be clipping coupons as a sort of recreation from steam yachting and automobilizing, instead of drawing occasional inspiration from the ozone of these Blue mountains."

Ed Hauser butted in: "Windy Bob Evans, who went from Sumpter to Tonopah, tells a hard luck story in about as terse a way as anybody. Evans wrote back to Sumpter friends as follows: 'Jumbo lasses are hoisting \$12,000 worth of ore a day. I am dealing faro at \$7.50 per shift. This is a hard world.'"

A mining man on the outskirts of the crowd elbowed a way into the center and said:

"Hard luck! Why, I am the only begotten son of Father Trouble. Not long ago I ran across an old mine down on Snake river, which in

years gone by has yielded millions, but which is now shut down. The watchman in charge permitted me to enter the workings, and after roaming around in badly ventilated tunnels, crawling through slippery upraises and losing my bearings in half-caved crosscuts, I bumped into a breast of ore that was simply lousy with gold. The candle light was reflected on big chunks of the yellow stuff. It glittered. It was glorious. I stood gasping. Coming out I asked the watchman if the mine was for sale. It was. 'How much?' I asked. He named a figure, and directed me to the owner in Portland. To Portland I went, post haste, figuring on a trip to Europe in the spring. The owner was an affable old gentleman. We commenced negotiations. The price placed on the mine meant spot cash, he said. That stumped me, of course. I had a couple of thousand, but that was all. I suggested that he give me a lease and bond. He was willing, with the proviso that all work under the lease should be supervised by himself. This looked peculiar, but I took a long chance, signed the lease, accepted the old man's bond for a deed, paid a cash deposit, and together we hurried back to the mine. I immediately ordered a crew of men to attack that gold-speckled breast of ore, and began to overhaul the mill for a week's run. 'Stop,' said the aged owner. 'I am the superintendent here.' He took the crew into a caved crosscut and began wheeling out muck worth forty cents per million pounds. I begged, I implored, I prayed the old man to let me take out that rich ore. He pointed to the terms of the lease, giving him sole and undisputed management of all underground work. 'That breast of ore is our show-piece,' he explained. 'It's there yet. Now if that old man had only dropped dead, I would be clipping coupons at this very moment. Talk about hard luck!'

FAKE JOURNALS FOR PROMOTION

Advising the purchase of shares in mining companies, which in general represent the business of the mining broker, naturally involves certain moral and business responsibilities which no broker can hardly fail to appreciate. As an indication of what the responsibility involves, it is noteworthy that many investors cannot be persuaded to buy stocks unless they can find someone else who is willing to assume the gift of prophecy and tell them what to do. The man who has money to invest naturally desires to place it where it will bring the best profit, while conserving itself as the principal. Those who are diffident will therefore frequently be found seeking the extremes of advice concerning their investments, either for or

against them, without stopping to realize that advice must either be founded on good judgment, bad judgment or malice and that a personal equation enters into the problem only to make it more complex. The investor will be wiser if he cultivates his own judgment, even while appealing to others, whose service, however, should best be required when it comes to the gathering of uncolored facts.

The broker who offers a piece of advice usually gives facts as his justification and his clients may defer to his judgment, not only in the selection of the facts but in the weighing of them, this being the case, particularly where the broker has a business of long standing and has given frequent proof to his customers both of his wisdom and of his professional integrity. Such a broker as this appreciates his responsibility and is not apt to wilfully sacrifice his own interests by making a wrong suggestion to his clients.

From the circular letters of a broker to the so-called "house organ" or promotion journal it is only a few steps, but the development of such a publication can also be approached from the direction of a bona fide magazine or newspaper. Where the "house organ" bears the imprint of the broker or promoter and makes no pretense of being anything other than what it is, it stands as a highly developed form of the circular method of advertising and the reader judges it accordingly. But where the publication mentioned carefully conceals its connections and by some "hocus-pocus" secures the second class mail matter privilege from the postoffice, so that it may masquerade as a legitimate magazine or newspaper, it stands merely as the most degenerate type of journalism and should be avoided. It is worse than a subsidized political newspaper, because the latter cannot conceal its bias, whereas the promotion journal may be made to reach the purse of small investors by the most insidious means, without revealing the nature of its disguise.

The promotion journal of this description can serve all the purpose of retailing mercenary advice to the unwary without bringing upon itself any responsibility that it has cause to fear. It is of mushroom growth and it does not expect to survive long, whereas the reputable publication of long standing, representing nothing but honest journalistic ideas, knows that its future depends upon its record. Advice without responsibility behind it is no advice at all, and fulsome advice can usually be viewed with suspicion. If an investor is too anxious to secure it he can find all the promotion journals he wants to furnish it.—Daily Mining Record.

Bowers Invests \$500.

According to a deed filed with the county recorder of Grant county, Arthur Wightman has sold to W. S. Bowers, of Baker City, a five-sixteenths interest in the Chloride, Governor, Golden Gate, and Peek-a-Boo quartz claims, in the Susanville country, for \$500.