

WEALTH IN SANDS OF SNAKE RIVER

Another man has discovered another infallible process for saving fine gold in Snake river sands. This latest addition to the already long list of inventors who have made big claims born to unfulfillment, is T. L. Gregg, an old prospector who makes Ontario his headquarters, and whose gold-saving machine, he says, is the result of twenty years of study and experiment.

The machine consists of a hopper, a lead trough, and a concentrator and amalgamator. A small model has been operated with good success on one of the bars off No Man's Island, and the inventor is now making preparations to construct a larger machine, with a nine-foot travel, which he intends putting to work on the same bar, where he says there is almost any amount of pay gravel available. With this big machine he proposes to handle fifty tons of gravel a day, and he calculates that to do this will require the services of

three men and a span of horses. The gravel will be fed into the hopper by means of a large shovel, and as there is always a plentiful supply of water in the river, operations may be carried on without interruption.

The machine differs from other sluice-boxes in that the bottom of the hopper and lead trough are covered with a coarse wire screen on top of the blanket. The cross-wires press into the blanket by the weight of the netting, and thus a large number of small pockets are formed, in which the concentrates are caught. Gold escaping the pockets in the hopper invariably will lodge in the pockets of the lead trough, but, should it be so fine as to again slip through, the quicksilver-covered copper plate on the last box will stay its progress, and thus every particle of the yellow metal will be saved, though it might be as fine as powder. This is the contention of Mr. Gregg, the inventor, and he is willing to stake his all on the outcome.

INJUNCTION INVOLVING VIRTUE MINE TAILINGS

An important suit was begun in the circuit court of this county by the Virtue Mines Development company against Judge E. D. Owens' to restrain the defendant from removing tailings from the old workings of the Virtue mine. The plaintiff alleges that the defendant is removing tailings from that property without right or authority, and asks judgment for the value of the tailings already taken away, and alleges that the value is two thousand dollars.

The defendant admits he has been removing such tailings and in his answer pleads or will plead that he purchased all the tailings upon that property for the sum of \$1,400, and has a right to remove as many as he sees fit up to the first of January, 1906, under his contract of purchase.

The plaintiff has procured the issuance of an injunction against the defendant, and has retained C. A. Johns as its attorney, and the defendant is about to move for a dis-

solution of the same through his attorneys, Hart and Smith.

It has been demonstrated that these tailings are of great value, as under the system of working used in the pioneer days much of the value was allowed to float off and is now to be found in these tailings. It appears that tests of them at the new Sumpter smelter show that the defendant made a good and profitable investment, and the fight will be to a finish and for blood.

Evidently the whole case will turn upon the question of fact more than upon legal propositions. The motion to dissolve will be heard upon the return of Judge Eakin to La Grande from Enterprise, where he is now holding his regular term of court.

Recently the Virtue company, under the Buckbee management, sold its tailings dump to Assayer Davey and son, of Baker, who in turn sold to Owen.

THUNDER MOUNTAIN FAKIR IS CINCHED

The jury which has been hearing the suit against Frank S. Hobbs, who has been in the Ludlow street jail for the last ten months, in the Supreme court in Brooklyn, New York, before Judge Dickey, involving the sale of an interest in the Comstock Mines company during the boom days of Thunder Mountain, Idaho, brought in a verdict for the plaintiff for \$7,900.

The action was brought by Edward B. Tustin, of Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, last year's treasurer of the Greene Consolidated copper company, to recover \$7,500 from Hobbs, who lives at Boise City, Idaho, alleged to have been paid by the plaintiff for securing an interest in the property of the Comstock. During the course of the trial it developed that neither the promoter nor the prospector who had sold the properties in New York was desirous of being held to account for having issued a prospectus, in which many of the statements advanced were shown to have been misleading.

The testimony showed that Frank S. Hobbs came to New York in 1903 with a view of disposing of his claims, which he purported to own at Thunder Mountain, Idaho. He was introduced to Charles W. Ray, a promoter, of No. 66 Broadway, who organized the Comstock Mines company with a capital stock of \$1,000,000. The stock was placed on the market, and through associates Ray was introduced to E. B. Tustin, who agreed to put \$20,000 into the company and advanced \$7,500 as a first payment.

During the trial it was shown that Ray never had a separate account for the funds of the company, but that the money received for the sale of stock was placed to his individual credit. It was also shown that in several instances instead of selling treasury stock to various applicants, Ray disposed of some of his own personal holdings. Ray testified that after the preliminary deals had been arranged he went to Idaho to look over the property. After his arrival there he found that the facts regarding the locations had been misrepresented by Hobbs. The property was at a considerable distance from the Dewey mine, a property which attracted some attention at the time of the boom, owing to the extent of the mill runs that were being made. On his return Ray is alleged to have turned the proposition down, but it was shown that he had given out several favorable interviews regarding the property.

The most interesting feature of the case was the testimony secured regarding the facts printed in the prospectus. Both Ray and Hobbs denied having written it, though they each accused the other of being its author. It was shown that there was a wide variation between the facts and the statements in the prospectus. On the front page of this document it was stipulated that as there were no brokers all commissions would be saved. Ray on the stand testified that he had received thirty-three per cent commission for the treasury stock which he sold.

Depositions taken from miners at Thunder Mountain showed that the various tunnels of which illustrated pictures were given in the prospectus were not there and Hobbs on the witness stand testified that he had understood that the word "proposed" had preceded the word tunnel when used in the prospectus.

In the prospectus such statements as "Mountains of Gold," "\$14,000,000 in sight in the Dewey," and "Dividends Will Roll In," were used to describe the Comstock property and adjoining mines.

A letter sent out by the promoter, Charles W. Ray, as treasurer of the company, was also put in evidence. It said in part: "Why is this opportunity is better than any other represented to you? The promoters and brokers are all eliminated, thus your money goes right for the stock." Again: "The four big properties of the Comstock Mines company are paid for, titles are clear, and we are on the same ore as the Dewey. The ore runs directly through the Dewey and the Comstock mines." As a postscript it was added: "Examine the pictures of the property and see that the Comstock mines are an exact duplicate of the Dewey."

The testimony showed that the claims were but partially developed and that some six men had been employed to work the properties. It was admitted that the company is now practically defunct.

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