

# BAKER MEN TO INVEST

A deal for the purchase of the electric light works, sawmill and water works at Prairie City are pending between the present owners of those enterprises and a syndicate of Baker City men, at the head of whom is George F. Wright, the wealthy farmer of Washington Gulch, and Dr. Carlton W. Faull, Justice of the Peace Alf Currey, of Baker City, is also interested in the negotiations. Judge Currey passed through Sumpter yesterday morning, en route to Prairie City, to join Dr. Faull, who has been in the interior town for the past week, looking over the ground. "The deal is pending," said Judge Currey to a Miner man, who met him at the train yesterday. "However, things have not yet crystallized, and nothing is in shape for publication, except the mere announcement that negotiations are on. I believe that the deal will be consummated. The proposition looks like a good investment, because when a railway strikes Prairie City, that town will boom. The country surrounding it is capable of supporting a town of at least the size of Baker City at the present time, and there is no reason why such a city should not be built as the metropolis of the interior. Prairie City is in my estimation admirably situated, in the heart of a rich mining region, as well as on the edge of as great a stockraising, wool growing and general agricultural country as ever laid out of doors."

Judge Currey expects to return in three days.

## BENEFICIENT INDUSTRY

That industry is most beneficent which does the greatest good to the community with the smallest admixture of harm. Measured by this standard, mining ranks very high, if not of the highest rank, among primary producers or manufacturers. It was his earliest acquaintance with the metals which helped primitive man to set his foot upon the first rung to the ladder of progress. No doubt his discovery was through some happy smelting accident, which may have occurred millions of times before it was observed and understood, but thence forward the way was comparatively clear. It meant the search for the ore, the production of copper and tin, the blending of the metals and the ascent to higher planes of civilization, as these were more widely utilized in the service of man. In providing it with metals, mining bestowed upon mankind, perhaps, the earliest approach we can conceive to an unmixed blessing; it was the uses which the metals were put when forged into weapons of offence which introduced the admixture.

What mining has been done for humanity can best be realized by imagining a world without coal or

iron, or any of their products. It is not difficult, because it was presented in the aspect of Australia with a quite recent memory, and is still presented among the South Sea savages. The dominant figure in each case is a barbarian but little, if any, above the brute level, while the lordly European is but what the metal miner has made him. Out of the industry also grew the more complex feature which has placed the old system of barter on its present basis of exchange for minted gold and silver. Sought at first, without question, for mere purposes of ornament, the beauty and comparative rarity of the royal metals soon suggested the practice which has broadened down to the modern method.

Then with the search for these equivalents of value came in the phase of mining which is unique among industries, in that it stands free of what the demagogues of the day denounce as the curse of competition. In the production of the industrial metals there is an element of competition, because the product has to be sold in open market against the product of other mines, but in gold and silver mining even this suspicion of alloy is removed and the miner crowds no one. This industry stimulates all others, supports others, enriches all others, and holds out its arm to welcome all others to its own domain.

The new farm and the new factory means a trespass, though a legitimate one, upon the markets of the old ones; the new mine means only more work, more wages and more world's wealth. This the miner distributes among the other industries and earners. He himself produces nothing he can eat, wear or use in any manner, except for the one exchange purpose, and he is therefore an ideal customer for the others. It is the miner who opens new countries, who connects them with old centers by lines of steamboats, who lays down railways, builds cities, and sets in motion all the wheels of the industries by which they are supported.

It has been estimated that each miner working underground finds employment for eight men above, and reflection should, therefore, suggest to the whole community that whatever helps the miner helps everybody. The converse just as strongly holds, that whatever harms the miner through his industry harms every business man, artisan and laborer in that state and retards the progress of the whole country. Business is never bad when mining is brisk, and the more prosperous the miner the more prosperous is the country he is engaged in developing. These are facts which should be kept very prominently in view by all the states, especially by those of such great extent and vast resources as West Australia Queensland and South Australia, and it may be taken as certain that the measure of the progress any state will make will be the measure of the encouragement it extends to the miner, and of the facilities it offers for the carrying on of this industry.—Australian Mining Standard.

### STRANGE TREE IN IDAHO OR A VIVID LIAR IN CHICAGO

According to a recent number of the Industrial Age, published in Chicago, one of the most peculiar trees in the world grows in northern Idaho. The Age says:

"There is in the wilds of north-western Idaho a species of the associa-

tree, which is entitled to be classed as one of the wonders of plant life. It grows to a height of about eight feet, and when full grown closes its leaves together in coils each day at sunset and curls its twigs to the shape of pig tails. After the tree has settled itself thus for a night's sleep, if touched, the whole thing will flutter as if agitated or impatient at being disturbed. The oftener the foliage is molested the more violent become the shaking of the branches, and at length the tree emits a nauseating odor which, if inhaled for a few moments, causes a violent, dizzy headache.

"The angry tree, as it has been named, was discovered by travelers, who, upon making camp for the night, placed one end of a canvas covering over one of the sensitive branches, using it for a support. Immediately the tree began to sharply jerk its branches. The motion continued, growing more nervous, until at last the sickening odor which it gave out drove the tired campers to a more friendly location.

"One of the angry trees was dug up and thrown to one side. Immediately upon being removed from the ground the tree opened its leaves, its twigs lost their pig tails, and for something over an hour and a half the outraged branches showed their indignation by a series of quakings, which grew weaker as the time passed, finally ceasing altogether, when the foliage hung limp and withered. The next morning the tree was placed upright on the ground again, a little water was applied to the roots, and very soon it resumed its normal condition."

## \$140,000,000 IN ROLLING STOCK

The Railway Age publishes statistics of motive power and rolling stock ordered by the railways in the last twelve months. It has been a matter of common knowledge that the orders placed for cars and locomotives during the last quarter of 1904 were both numerous and large, but few people realize they were of such a volume as to make the total for the year in excess of that for 1903. But the statistics compiled from official sources by the Railway Age show that there were 136,560 freight cars, 2,213 passenger cars and 2,538 locomotives of all kinds ordered during 1904.

These figures are derived from returns received officially from the railway companies and from the manufacturers of cars and locomotives, and the result is a set of tables showing in detail the number of each kind of car and locomotive ordered by each railway. A conservative estimate places the value of this equipment at \$140,000,000. Much of it is, of course, yet to be built, which insures active business for the equipment builders during the next six months.

During the past year considerable activity has been displayed on the Canadian side of the border in preparation for extensive car and loco motive building, both as regards contract work and company shops. Also, during the last few years, large increases have been made in railway shop facilities in the United States. The question has been raised as to the effect that these developments

may be expected to have upon the business of American contract builders.

Expressions of opinion from the leading American builders are to the effect that, as to the first question, the worst that can be expected is the loss of a portion of the Canadian orders that now come to this country, and these have constituted but a trifling percentage of their total business. The work of Canadian builders will necessarily be largely confined to domestic business, and even at the present rapid rate of development, it is likely to be some years before Canadian facilities will be great enough to supply the home demand.

As to the second point, builders express equally optimistic views. With the increase in volume of equipment in service the necessity for repair facilities also increases. It is considered unlikely that, except in rare instances, the increased shop facilities will be used to a large extent in new construction. This belief is rendered all the more probable from the generally conceded fact that contract companies can build for about 10 per cent less than railroad companies can do the work, provided the railway companies' estimates are based on a correct cost sheet and do not deceive themselves as to the cost of the work done in company shops.

A single other point is worthy of mention, and it is one upon which both the contract builders and the railroads are in full agreement. This is the matter of export business. While no attempt has been made to compile statistics under this head, it is apparent from the statements made by the larger concerns, builders of either cars or locomotives, that the volume of export work is constantly growing greater.

With the additional knowledge that must be gained of American methods and American workmanship by the presence soon in this country of large numbers of prominent foreign railway officials, this branch of our national industries should receive such an impetus from outside orders as to afford a substantial offset to the lean years, which may occur periodically in the home demand.—Boston Transcript.

### Ore Exhibit Assured.

At the adjourned meeting of the Sumpter city council tomorrow evening, the matter of a municipal appropriation for a permanent ore exhibit here will be disposed of. The judiciary committee of the council, to which the proposition was referred last Tuesday evening, has conferred with City Attorney Richards regarding the right of the council to make such an appropriation, and with Secretary Tony Mohr, of the Sumpter Miners' association, regarding the probable cost of fixing up permanent quarters and gathering the exhibit. Chairman Baird, of the judiciary committee, announces that the plan will be carried through.

### ESTRAY NOTICE.

Taken up, at the ranch of Henry Panning, near Whitney, last spring, two 2-year-old colts, one grey, branded "C" on left shoulder, and one bay branded S. Owner may regain property by paying expense of their keeping since the date of their taking up.

HENRY PANNING,  
Whitney, Ore.

December 30, 1904.