

BINGHAM'S BILL TO BECOME LAW

A special dispatch from Salem to the Baker City Democrat announces that the Bingham bill, exempting non-profit-paying mining corporations from taxation under the Eddy law, passed the state senate yesterday just before adjournment, and will become a law.

The principal provision of the Bingham bill is as follows:

"Any such mining corporation (organized under the laws of the state of Oregon) whose annual output or products shall not exceed in value the sum of \$1000, shall be exempted from the payment of the annual license fee or corporation tax as provided by law."

The bill provides that mining corporations shall, during the month of June of each year and before the first day of July of each year, furnish to the secretary of state, upon blanks to be supplied by him for that purpose, a correct statement, sworn to by one of its officers or the managing agent of such corporation, before some officer authorized to administer oaths, setting forth in detail the name of the corporation, the location of its principal office, the names of the president, secretary and treasurer thereof, with the postoffice address of each, the date of the annual election of officers and directors, the amount of authorized capital stock, the number of shares, their par value, amount of stock subscribed, issued and paid up, together with a statement of the value of the annual output or product of the mines of such corporation. All this data shall be suitably filed and indexed by the secretary and state and be deemed public records. A false affirmation shall be deemed perjury.

To make the bill palatable to those big close corporations which object so strenuously to making known their outputs, a proviso is inserted to the effect that no corporation shall be required to make the above statements if it shall pay the annual license fee as provided by the Eddy law, which is not repealed by the Bingham bill, except in so far as it conflicts therewith.

The Bingham was the result of numerous conferences at Salem between senators and representatives from the mining counties of this state, with those members of both houses who have always stood firm for the Eddy law. Smith, of Baker, attempted to pass a law absolutely exempting mining corporations from all forms of taxation, but this measure met overwhelming defeat in the house, by a vote of 42 to 9.

The Bingham bill is a satisfactory one to the mine operators of the Sumpter district.

Salem, Feb. 17.—Both houses of legislature adjourned sine die at 8 o'clock. The members left immediately on a special train for Portland.

The Jayne local option bill was indefinitely postponed in the senate by a vote of 16 to 13.

The bill to appropriate \$30,000 for the extension of the portage road, failed in the house by a vote of 30 to 27.

The senate bill to require entrances of saloons to be in front failed in the house.

The governor sent a message to the legislature this afternoon, stating he would veto the general appropriation bill unless it was amended. The emergency clause was stricken out and the governor urged not to veto it.

The house bill to compel a trunk railroad to connect with and handle the business of branch lines passed the senate.

The senate passed the house bill to appropriate \$70,000 for the erection of new buildings for the school, for mutes at Salem.

Rules were suspended and time for adjournment sine die at eight o'clock to allow the senate to act on a large number of bills.

LEDGE TAPPED AT NINE STRIKE EXT.

The ledge has been cut in a 115-foot crosscut tunnel on the Nine Strike Extension, on Little Cracker creek, owned by the Wisconsin Gold Mining company, of which Tony Mohr is general manager. Foreman Jack Stonehocker came down from the mine Tuesday night and reported to Manager Mohr that the vein has been opened. Manager Mohr has directed the working crew to immediately commence drifting. Where the vein is opened across the creek it displays a width of 25 feet. At the point where the 115-foot crosscut tunnel enters the ore the vein filling reveals all the characteristics of the mother lode, although the Nine Strike vein is a parallel system, presumably being on the same zone as the Cracker Oregon.

The Nine Strike Extension crosscut was driven from the bottom of Little Cracker through a strata of alluvial wash—a treacherous sort of ground in which to work. Extra heavy timbers and lagging were necessary. Manager Mohr felt highly elated over the successful consummation of a somewhat difficult and trying piece of mining work.

Drifting on the vein will attain a depth of 1000 feet when a point under the apex of the lode is reached. As soon as a payshoot is entered, shipments to the Sumpter smelter will be made.

MINT MINE IN STICE'S GULCH, RICH AS MINT

Paul Betzold, the German prospector and sole partner of J. W. Buckley, of Baker City, came into town yesterday from the Mint, their mine at the head of Stice's Gulch, from which it is supposed owed the gold taken out in the Auburn placers by the millions forty years ago, and brought with him some specimens of ore which he had just struck in their main tunnel. Much excitement was

caused immediately in all local mining circles, as the ore is extremely rich, being a silver-galena, which will assay in the thousands to the ton.

The finding of this mine reads like a romance. Three years ago Mr. Buckley grubstaked the German. They went in as partners half and half. Buckley furnished the grub, tools and powder, the German did the work. Against discouragement of his partner and others he has been plodding along all the time, driving his tunnel foot by foot into the mountains where no one could see any surface indications.

Wednesday he struck the blind ledge, rich in the richest kind of ore. He says the ledge is about two feet wide, and as they have four claims located, it would seem as if the faith of the grubstaker and the prospector are about to be realized, and rewarded amply. Betzold will leave for the property today and drive the tunnel, which is now in 270 feet, another foot or two and bring in a complete sample of the ore across the face of the vein, when they will have the ore thoroughly tested. Mr. Buckley himself is the coolest man in town but many of his friends and older mining men are worked up over the proposition and predict all kinds of good things in that camp in the immediate future. In fact, a stampede there is not beyond a possibility.—Democrat.

JOAQUIN MILLER TELLS OF OLD PIONEER DAYS

Some weeks since, The Miner published an editorial written for a Canyon City paper by Joaquin Miller in January, 1869. Regarding it the old poet of the Sierras has written the editor of the East-Oregonian the following letter:

An honest old storekeeper got me to write an editorial for the first number of his little paper as a sort of advertisement.

All I now remember is my horror at finding it full of mistakes. It seems they couldn't read it, and I have found many folks like them, since then. But please send me a copy, as I have lost all trace of the thing.

No, I did not write in a red shirt with a sixshooter on my desk. I was probate judge in a district larger than all New England, and as I was the youngest lawyer in the town I had to have dignity—that is, be stiff as a poker, without a curve.

In fact, Canyon City never was a typical town of the border. We had such men at the bar as W. Lair Hill, Joseph Woods and Senator George H. Williams, who deported themselves much as the professions do at the present times.

Sorry I cannot furnish you a "wild and woolly" story, but we were a sober and genteel lot. The name of the real founder of the little paper often credited to myself is Captain Fearing, who was keeping store at Antelope, Oregon, the last I heard of him. Love to you and yours.

Death of Oscar O. Benson.

Grant Thornburg received a telegram last evening, announcing the death in Portland of Oscar Benson. It was stated in The Miner several days ago that he was not expected to live. Monday he was operated on for strangulation of the bowels, and he failed to rally from the shock. He will be buried today in Portland.

Oscar O. Benson was a pioneer mining man of eastern Oregon, operating mines at different times in Baker and Grant counties. In 1877 he arrived in Granite district and engaged in mining, both quartz and placer, and during his residence in the camp, together with Clark Tabor, became the owner of the Red Boy mine, which they developed. Later E. J. Godfrey became associated in the property and leaving Messrs. Godfrey and Tabor to manage the property Mr. Benson came to Sumpter and engaged in the mercantile business, in which he continued until about eight years ago, when he sold out and went to Portland with his family, consisting of a wife and six children. At the time of his death, Mr. Benson was about 55 years of age. He was a man universally respected and had many warm friends in eastern Oregon.

Heney After East Oregonians.

Portland, Feb. 16.—Judge Tanner has notified Senator Mitchell he desires to discontinue their law partnership. Tanner refuses to discuss the matter. T. B. Neuhaussen was today appointed to take charge of the government secret service here, with instructions to prosecute further inquiries into timber frauds. Current belief here is that there will not be the slightest abatement of vigor and thoroughness in the government's efforts in this direction, and that the next turn of the wheel will disclose probably two dozen men who have state reputations on the rack—among them some of the best known politicians and business men. The names of several eastern Oregon men of prominence are mentioned in semi-confidence as possible defendants, after the grand jury reconvenes in April.

Activity in Cornucopia District.

Superintendent John A. Wilson, of the Mayflower mine in the Cornucopia district, arrived in the city yesterday, and states there is not half the snow in that camp that they usually have at this season of the year, and that mining has been quite active in the Mayflower, Queen of the West and several other properties and preparations are making for the opening of much work in the early spring and the enlargement of the work already on hand. "At the Mayflower, you can say, that since we cut the parallel vein the other day and found the same rich ores there as in the west vein, we have started the north drift and ore from that point runs about \$70 to the ton in many places. There is not a place in the mine but carries value and in all my experience I never saw a more promising property. I think there is no doubt but that in the next few years will see the greatest mining camp in the Cornucopia district ever known in the northwest."—Democrat.

Maynard Loses His Case.

John Riggs returned from La Grande yesterday and Ed. Rand, Joe Davenport and Frank Marshall today. They were there as witnesses in the case of Maynard versus the O. R. & N., a suit for \$20,000 for personal injuries claimed to have been sustained in a wreck more than a year ago. These witnesses testified as to the extent of his injuries, stopping him from work at Olive lake. The jury returned a verdict in favor of the railroad. This is the fourth trial of the case. Twice the plaintiff was awarded damages and once the jury disagreed.