

Mining in Central Placer County 1893

To THE Editor:—The numerous quartz properties of central Placer county seem to be attracting more attention at the present time than for a number of years past. One familiar with the geology and minerals of this gold producing section can only feel that they have been neglected or overlooked too long.

The adaptability of the climate and soil for early and citrus fruit-growing seems to have turned all enterprise and thought to their production and shipment for eastern and even foreign markets.

The little mining that has been done (some one has more appropriately than poetically termed it "grass-root mining"), when applied to quartz-mining, means no mining at all.

The late sale of the Three Stars mine and other properties in the Ophir district, to a Colorado company for a very large sum of money (in silver) promises the commencement of active and thorough mining in this section. A shaft is being sunk on Bald Hill, where a regular fissure vein is known to carry heavily mineralized quartz. Bald Hill district has so many fine-appearing quartz ledges, and it has always been so bewildering to miners, notwithstanding the fact that a great deal of gold has been taken out, that no extensive work has ever been prosecuted on any one vein.

Although quartz ledges are known to abound on either side of the slate and granite contact which extends north from Bald Hill into Nevada county, no prospecting of any significance has been done south of Wolf creek. Why, is more than any one can tell. A ledge over 23 feet wide has been sunk to the depth of 40 feet and is known to carry more than enough gold to pay for working. The owner, more interested in tilling the soil than mining, has never made any disposition of it. Such properties in the hands of practical and experienced mine managers would yield dividends on their working and inevitably add impetus and life to their surroundings.

Much is always said about every good-paying mine, especially when it has been a bullion-producer so long that no one can withhold full confidence in its permanency, while with undeveloped veins quite the reverse is true. The question is, "Who is to determine where it would be advisable to invest money, testing the mineral value of exposed veins?"

In looking for an answer, but one thing suggests itself. The idea is of a "county geologist and mineralogist," who, in connection with the "county surveyor," having an office in common use, could acquire positive information and data which would attract intending purchasers or their agents and experts from every mine-purchasing center of the world, depending only upon the accessibility and reliability of its information.

This in counties where minerals in endless variety are as abundant as in Placer and many other counties in California would serve a broader purpose than a superficial consideration might suggest. While the State geologist, might furnish much such data, many details of the most importance must be omitted. The volume of such accumulations has lately been a matter of State concern, and suggests that something else be adopted. A detailed report of just the geological and mineralogical facts of almost any particular mining district in this State would fill an ordinary volume, and, where mining is prosecuted, developments would add to the accumulations. This makes it desirable that local districts acquire maps, charts and data, which, owing to their volume, the State could not be expected to produce.

This idea may not be new, but certainly has not met with any very general comment from the press of the State. Only a small portion of the minerals mined from the earth's crust is used for coins, and, should agitation ever produce a moneyless nation, it would not stop the mining for such minerals as are

necessities in civilized life. Salt eating has removed savagery and elevated the "tastes" of man in many particulars, demanding the utility of all the known elements that must come from but the one source—the ground. Give us more positive knowledge of the formations, and increased production is assured.

Auburn, Aug. 9, 1893.

J. C. Hawver,

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{Note: Dr. John Christor Hawver was an Auburn dentist that also found Hawver Cave}