

### Ophir, Renewed Activity in an Old Mining Camp.

EDITORS Press :—For some time past the mining industry in this portion of Placer county has been decidedly on the wane, and the indication were that but few more pages would be added to the mining history of this once thrifty and profitable mineral belt. This state of affairs was the result of a combination of causes of no great moment, but of sufficient importance to produce for the time being a general stagnation. That the mines yielded almost fabulously in the palmy days of the past is an assured fact, and that extensive and paying ore bodies still exist is equally as certain. Many promising quartz fields are to\*day practically abandoned or only sufficiently worked to protect the titles to property, either through bad management that has resulted in the cessation of operations in leading mining propositions and the closing down of other properties that were only developed to a very limited extent. The latter theory is applicable here and is unquestionably the primary, and, in fact, the sole cause for the decline that has been experienced. The opinion has prevailed among mining men that this district was one of the "pocket " order, and it must be admitted that the shallow workings and the discoveries made have gone far to corroborate this opinion. This idea has kept capitalists from becoming identified with our promising 'camp, and deep development is consequently unknown. Without but a single exception it is a question if there is a property out of the large number operated in the past that has been explored to a greater depth than 250 feet, while the majority of them that paid well have never been developed below the 100 level. Within the last two years, however, a radical change has taken place and our straggling delvers can now discern the glow that foretells of brighter days. Syndicates and combinations have been formed that are now operating some of our most promising properties, and so far as development has progressed results of the most encouraging nature have been their reward.

#### The Hathaway Mine,

Operated by Valentine Bros, of San Francisco, is a striking illustration of what depth will do toward enhancing the probabilities of our surface—prospected mines—and the pronounced improvement that is everywhere apparent in the deeper workings of that property will be a safe criterion for the guidance of those who premeditate operating here. For years this property existed only in name, no work of any consequence being performed in it, but to-day it is one of the best paying mines in this portion of the Golden State, and is steadily improving in value as work progresses. True, the character of the ore has become more rebellious as depth has been attained, but this is a natural characteristic of granite formation and a change that mining men of experience expect. Fortunately, this change is no detriment to the owners, but to the contrary is a welcome one. Though refractory, it is exceedingly rich, and, under the system of concentration employed, it is easily saved and transported to chlorination works for reduction. In connection with the sulphureta, the vein also carries a paying quantity of free gold.

#### The Eclipse,

Another mine of great promise that was recently purchased by a combination of Eastern capitalists is now being developed under the supervision of J. B. Patterson, through whose efforts the property was sold. In early days this mine was extensively worked, near the surface, by Spaniards, and the rook milled through arastras, and those who are conversant with the past history of the property assert that it yielded gold in large quantities, but the volume of water encountered and the inability to handle it by the primitive methods employed, no efforts were ever made to follow the ore body below the water level. Time and time again parties undertook the responsibility of giving the property a general exploration, but as often abandoned the undertaking, fearing to delve deeper on account of water. The development that has taken place under Mr. Patterson's supervision has demonstrated the fact that the volume of water generally regarded as an insurmountable obstacle, baa its home near the surface and that the greater part of it can be

caught in tanks, thereby doing away with all the inconvenience it has caused, and the mine can be probed at a great depth with but little trouble from this source. The location, if your correspondent has been correctly informed, comprises 24 acres in the very heart of this rich mineral zone, and is traversed by three ledges that crop on the surface, all of which have yielded well. The veins are remarkably strong and well defined, existing between perfect walls, and though the formation is granite there is a lap of porphyry on the foot-wall that follows, with striking regularity, the three veins, So far as can be ascertained, but little drifting has been done on either of the veins—all the wealth extracted having been taken from the numerous shafts or inclines that were sunk or within a very short distance on either side of such openings. Though it is well known that, this entire belt is a perfect network of quartz veins, it is remarkable that no underground crosscutting has been performed, but to the contrary, all explorations have been confined to the veins upon which openings were made. As an illustration of the benefits to be derived from such

#### Work Under the Ground,

It is only necessary to call attention again to the fact that three strong veins, all having a surface existence, pass through the Eclipse location. Is it not a reasonable hypothesis that an equal or even greater number of what are termed "blind ledges" have a home within the confines of the boundary lines. These so-called "blind ledges" are just as liable to hold a chute of ore as those that throw "float;" in fact miners have a superstitious idea that hidden veins are the best. Supt. Patterson is thoroughly familiar with all the peculiarities of this mineral belt and particularly acquainted with the Eclipse ground, and it is his intention to drive the improvements already projected, into virgin ground, and then crosscut the territory on either side of both veins upon which inclines are being run.

Arrangements are now being made for the erection of hoisting works, and when this essential is in operation a searching exploration of the ground will be commenced. The opening of this property is watched with deep interest by mining men identified with this district, as the future of the camp will depend largely upon the success or failure of this proposition. Old timers, however, all concur in the opinion that success will certainly crown the effort and that a valuable and heavy producing mine will be the result. Water-power will be employed to run the machinery, and economy, in operating the property, will be most rigidly observed. The property is admirably situated for cheap working, being within a short distance of the railroad, and the cost of transporting necessary mining supplies, etc., comparatively light. By way of diversion it might be interesting to those who are identified with the property to know that

#### There Is a Gulch

Between the two veins upon which they are now sinking, and during the placer days of long ago this gulch was worked from its source to its mouth, and if reports be true, and they seem to be well authenticated, was fabulously rich, pieces of the yellow metal weighing as much as \$2000 having been taken from the shallow surface washing. This gulch was unmistakably fed by the float from the two ledges alluded to or the wearing down of an ore chute in one or both of them. Taking everything into consideration, those who are investing in this proposition have the assurance that their venture is one of great promise, and if the opinions of experienced miners have an existence in fact, the time will come when "Eureka" will be their cry.

It is reported that the Gold Blossom, an old and well-known mine, will be started up this fall or as soon as water can be obtained to run the machinery. The Bellevue is now being worked and it is rumored that a force of men will be put to work in the Three Stars and the Belmont.

That the mining horizon is much brighter than it has been for years is positively certain and it is not improbable that our old mining camp will again experience a semblance of its old-time glory.

R C. G.

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