

NEW GOLD CAMP

A Visit to Rich Deposits Lying Near Salt Lake City.

VAST QUANTITIES OF LOW-GRADE ORE

Wonderful Extent of the Mercur District and Its Possibilities.

DOWN IN THE DEPTHS

(Copyright, 1896, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

SALT LAKE CITY, September 14, 1896.

THE MOST WONDERFUL

regions of the new gold regions of the United States is now

being developed within

in three hours' by

of Salt Lake City. It is only thirty-

three miles away, as

the crow flies, and its

treasures have until

now lain undisturbed

within almost walk-

ing distance of one of

the liveliest centers

of the west. For years some of the most

expert miners in the United States have

worked in or near it. It is known as the

Mercur mining district, and is on the slope

where Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston had

his camp at the time of the Utah war. Between

1870 and 1880 it was known as a silver

region, and in one mine a single pocket

of silver produced \$125,000, some of the ore

averaging \$2,000 to the ton. At this time

the late Senator Hearst and Marcus Daly

were among the mine owners. They began

to mine there in 1880, but they obtained

gold, but they could find no color in the

rock, and no paying means of getting out

the gold. Marcus Daly reduced the ore to

powder, and day after day panned and

washed it looking for gold. At last he

threw down his pan in disgust and said

that the assayer was a fraud. He left

Utah and went to Montana, where he

bought the Alice mine, and from it dis-

covered the biggest copper region of the world.

America's Johannesburg.

And still this district is now said to

contain more than enough gold to pay the

national debt. I have gone through one mine

which has already produced more than a

million dollars' worth of gold, and which

has paid to its stockholders a half million

dollars in dividends. Other mines have

been opened which have a ton of gold

of an estimated value of more than \$100,000,

and within the past eighteen months

more than 2,500 mining claims have been

taken up within it. It is now producing

about \$5,000 worth of gold a day, and I see

it is estimated that its product this year

will amount to \$1,000,000. The camp, as

far as pay work is concerned, is only

four years old, and it has been made possible

only by the invention of the new cyanide

process. The great Mercur mine is the

rock. As it is, the gold is being mined at

less cost, in all probability, than in any

other mining district in the world. Its ore

is so much like that of the Rand district

of South Africa that the people here

have named it the Johannesburg of Amer-

ica. The ore can be mined and treated,

however, at less than half the cost of the

Cripple Creek. The charge for reducing

gold at Cripple Creek is \$3.50 a ton. Here

the cost of the great Mercur mine tells

me that the cost of mining and reducing

does not exceed \$1 per ton, while in the

Mercur mine about four miles away, the

ore can be dug out and treated for less

than \$2 per ton. There are already

five cyanide mills in operation in the dis-

trict, and there are others in course of

construction.

Three Golden Blankets.

But let me give you some idea of this

last great gold discovery of the world.

The story is so wonderful that I fear to

write what I believe to be the truth, lest I

be charged with exaggeration. Imagine,

if you can, the great blankets of golden

rock, each from five to fifty feet thick,

lying one above the other, with blankets of

shale between them. Let these blankets

cover about four miles above the town of

Mercur, at a distance of eight miles

above the sea, and let them slope off in

the shape of an inclined plane, cropping

out the great blankets of gold in the

Sundance mine, about four miles away, and

valley for a distance of eight miles. Let

the blankets be nearly a mile wide, and

let the golden treasures within them

be worth all the money that can be made

in the world, and you have some idea of this

wonderful camp. The gold does not lie in

little veins, but in great masses, and in

places where the blankets extend more regu-

larly through these enormous blankets, so

that you may start your mine in places

where the vein shows out of the sides of

the mountains and dip on and on, taking

nothing but ore-bearing rock for miles.

The district as defined by its working

mines is known to be at least eight miles

long and at least 3,000 feet in width. It is

supposed to be much larger, and claims

have been taken up and holes have been

sunk for miles around. One man, a well-

known miner of Leadville, Maj. John

Bellevue, who is now a geologist, has

seven miles in width, and he is sinking a

shaft over the mountain, almost a

mile further down in altitude, and

seven miles away, in the Utah valley, on a

sage brush prairie. He says that he will

go down at least 1,000 feet, and he then

expects to strike the golden blanket. Many

of the miners are, however, skeptical as to

his success, but should his theory prove

correct the riches of the Mercur district

beyond human conception and the rela-

tions of gold and silver to the world may

be changed by the result. As it is, at the

most conservative estimate, the probable

riches are enormous. Three blankets of

gold eight miles long and 3,000 feet wide

will turn out riches hitherto unknown in

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