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CALIFORNIA GOLD MINERS MEET IN CONVENTION TO CONSULT AS TO THEIR INTERESTS

Representatives Are Here From All Parts of the State.

SOME NEW LEGISLATION RECOMMENDED.

Important Opinion Handed Down by the Attorney-General.

A QUESTION AS TO LEGALITY OF CONTRACTS.

Important Report Off red by the Committee on Legislation and Suggestions Made.

Cassasa's band played "The Arkansas Traveler," "The Belle of the Mohawk Vale," and other old-time airs redolent of the American prairies, as the Miners' State Convention filed into Odd Fellows' Hall yesterday morning.

It was fortunate that the music was there, for the air was damp and chill because of the drizzly weather outside, and the hall was as gloomy as a cavern. Even the lighting of the gas chandelier on the stage would have emphasized the gloom were it not for the music, which drove away the darkness, the dampness, the rheumatism, the malaria and the other demons of the air which guard the hidden treasures of the gold mines from the hardy miners of California.

This was so unmistakably the case that when the band failed to make its appearance at the opening of the afternoon session it was found necessary to light nearly all the gas jets in the hall.

It was a representative body that assembled yesterday morning. While the majority of the delegates were miners, there was a plentiful sprinkling of lawyers and millionairs, for every one knows that wealth produces litigation and that California gold mines produce millionaires.

Mr. Neff, in calling the convention to order, said:

I congratulate you and the cause of the mining industry upon the fourth assembly of the annual convention of the California Miners' Association. I am pleased to see so many of you here. It proves that interest in this association is not lacking, but increasing, and it only remains to be up true to ourselves and to the interest that we are advocating that the great mining industry of this coast will come to the fore and that it is, as it has been, one of the leading industries to carry on the prosperity of this great State.

Chairman Neff appointed the following committee on credentials: Judge Ira H. Reed of Calaveras, J. S. McBride of Nevada, E. C. Voorheis of Amador, E. C. Loftus of Tuolumne, Colonel George Stone of San Francisco, T. J. Nichols of Placer, James O'Brien of Yuba, Colonel N. E. Pickett of El Dorado and L. F. Byington of Sierra.

A recess was then taken until 2 P. M.

The first business after recess was the report of the committee on credentials, as follows, which report was adopted and 451 delegates were declared entitled to seats on the floor:

Nevada County—J. S. McBride, R. C. Walrath, Fred Zeitler, W. F. Englebright, M. Bates, E. J. Rector, J. S. Gregory, H. Lane, George Nitell, William Giffee, F. Ellerman, George C. Taylor, M. L. Marsh, Will Fisher, George E. Turner, W. G. Richards, A. D. Maton, J. M. Walling, J. J. Jackson, C. J. Brand, Charles Stepp, C. H. Mallon, J. H. Northway, Niles Searls, W. Martin, Dahl Nirens, C. Schuster, D. McGall, J. T. Morgan, Joseph Fetz, Gus Kartychoke, Fred Searls, George C. Shaw, F. E. Wadsworth, N. P. Brown, E. Tilley, A. H. Walrath, Mat Foard, H. Pengelley, Peter Tapphaus, F. Brockman, J. V. Hermter, C. Jepson, L. L. Meyers, R. D. Skidmore, J. H. Helwig, W. Mobley, A. S. Biggelow, P. Curnow, Daniel Coffin, C. E. Wren, F. J. Dawson, Thomas Pierce, Alfred Tregidgo, H. G. Parsons, W. F. Prisk, C. E. Clinch, Robert Walker, Arthur Foote, Joseph Weissberg, Samuel Granger, J. L. Lakeman, John Glassow, L. E. Phillips, M. Farrell, E. C. Culler, John Eddie, T. H. Willie m, George D. McLean, Louis Dorsey, George Mainhart, D. B. Marsick, R. R. Porter, J. P. Maleville, William Campbell, Edward Morgan, George Fletcher, James Haskings, M. Sproul, J. F. Kidder, M. C. Taylor, W. R. Eckart, James Bennalleck Sr., William George, R. Linder, J. S. Goodwin, L. J. Graver, C. D. Eastin, H. Fritter, G. Ozalil, C. Peach, O. Woebier, E. J. de Sobla, C. L. Miller, R. A. Thomas.

Placer County—Thomas Richard, John Landers, P. C. Secar, William Rea Sr., Dr. B. B. Brewer and J. W. M. McCall, of Forest Hill; J. P. Burchard, S. S. Vail, F. J. Horswell and T. G. Downing, of Rocklin; Charles D. Aiers and L. S. Moffith, of Bath; S. M. Sprague, H. Simons, M. R. Gleeson, D. A. Russell, John Papa, Frank Papa, T. Michaels, Benjamin Rossi, G. W. Cross, F. J. Adge and Seymour Waterhouse, of Iowa Hill; C. G. Kershner, G. R. Cowan, Harold T. Power, St. C. Nye, George Cooper, John W. Clark, John A. Ferguson and F. E. Colburn, of Sunny South; M. T. Lawrence, F. H. Bell, John Adams, J. M. Fulweiler and Charles F. Reed, of Auburn; Jas. L. Gould, J. E. Doolittle, John Nicholls, Louis Tetzlaff and Chris Runckel, of Dutch Flat; Morris Lobner, Henry Disque, Ivan H. Parker, W. A. Edinger and Henry Lobner, of Colfax; Allen Towle, Andrew Rodger, Joseph Dixon and William Rodger, of Alta; William Rule, D. M. Kent and M. Morgan, of Mayflower mine; F. Chapellet Jr. and Thomas Crosby, of Eureka mine; G. S. Sanborn and Charles E. Mason, of Yankee Jim: Charles P. Hoffman and W. W. Truesdell, of Red Point; Robert Jones and John C. Boggs, of Newcastle; Charles A. Reed and Lorenzo Pillar, of Ophir; G. C. Hepburn of Applegate; A. E. Moody of Gold Run.

Plumas County—A. B. White, D. H. Birdsall, S. W. Cheney, G. P. Cornell, J. H. Roberts.

San Diego County—T. E. Aubury.

San Francisco County—S. K. Thornton, Samuel J. Hendy, J. M. Wright, Niles Searls, L. F. Reichling, Louis Sloss, C. W. Cross, Julian Sonntag, Andrew Carrigan, A. J. Ralston, Thomas R. Church, E. A. Belcher, Louis Glass, Charles G. Yale, Samuel G. Backus, T. J. Parson, Louis Janin, J. L. Leonard, George Stone, A. F. C. Hasson, F. A. Huntington, T. J. Halloran, W. W. Montague, George Goodman, George C. Sargent, B. D. Pike, Henry Pecholr, George Johnston, George W. Tomb, Alfred Holman, Calvert Meade, F. W. Edelston, Jacob Frowenfield, Ross E. Brown, Edward Coleman, John C. Coleman, Charles Barber, Wakefield Baker, Captain W. F. Mills, Squire Mooney, Charles Allenberg, Francis Smith, A. Foorman, Thomas Lally, J. O'B. Gunn, Hugh Craig, J. J. Newsom, D. E. Hayes, D. E. Miles, Thomas Kirkpatrick, Charles Watt, A. McLaughlin, S. H. Tacy, J. Bermingham.

San Bernardino County—F. W. Edelsten.

Santa Barbara County—J. B. Treadwell.

Santa Clara County—Charles C. Derby, Robert R. Bamore, Edard W. Carson, Richard Pearce, Thomas Wadey.

Sierra County—J. M. Harper, Charles P. Gale, Paul Meroux, H. W. Orear, J. W. Orear, H. H. Squire, John Scott, S. Purdy, Frank R. Wehe, Ed. F. Wehe, Tirey L. Ford, Lewis F. Byington, Louis Rosenfeld, Mason W. Mather, J. O. Jones, E. A. Miley, F. W. Page, James McGregor, G. H. Campbell, W. F. Hanly, A. B. Moulder, Claude T. Hamilton, P. Van Clief, J. Copeland, A. J. Meroux, Stanley A. Smith, J. A. Vaugh, J. F. Cowdery, Daniel P. Cole, M. H. Mead, Henry Kingdon, A. West-ll, Julian Sonntag, Andrew Carrigan, Thomas Kirkpatrick, S. Spalding Sr., W. F. Eschbacher, John Costa, W. J. Holmes, Thomas H. Crossman, James S. Wiggins, P. R. Gardner, J. M. Haven, I. T. Mooney, George D. Gray, Giles H. Gray, Thomas E. Haven, J. H. Hickox, W. S. George, G. W. Hughes, C. C. McIvor, Henry Rosenfeld.

Siskiyou County—Robert Nixon and James F. Faraher of Yreka, A. H. Bar of Callahans, Major A. G. Myers and Martin C. Beer of Fort Jones.

Yuba County—W. R. Meek of Comptonville, J. C. Campbell of Brownsville, James Nelson of Oregon House, Daniel Cettins of Dobbins House, William Jeffards of Browns Valley, Otto Woehler of Spencerville, G. M. M. Ross of Browns Valley, James O'Brien, Thomas Conlin, E. F. Holbrook, John McQuaid, W. W. Chamberlain, Louis Comath, C. C. Durham and Joseph Deniel of Smartsville, O. C. Mayo of Comptonville.

Alameda County—J. S. White, W. R. Thomas, T. W. Jeffres, A. H. Ricketts, S. B. Christy, E. J. Benjamin, George Burbeck, W. E. Hale, G. I. Taggart, H. G. Blaisdel, Dr. Ray Smith, F. Chappelet, Mark Webber, Charles G. Yale, W. C. Ralston, E. C. Loftus, E. C. Rigney, Warren Chilling, Robert McKilligan, John B. Eldridge.

Amador County—M. J. McDonald, C. E. Purrington, C. E. Roberts, John R. Tregloan, W. F. Keeney and John B. Tregloan, of Amador City; E. G. Voorhies, Morris Brinn, John Ross, W. E. Downs, S. N. Knight, J. H. Tibbets, Wm. Castle, W. J. McGee, John Tregloan, Jackson Dennis, W. C. Randall and W. R. Thomas of Sutter Creek; W. F. Detert, John F. Davis, David Gutman, J. E. Dye, A. Caminetti, John M. Wright, L. F. Reichling, Colonel Ranlett, Mr. Bibo, E. A. Freeman, John H. McIntyre, James F. Parks and Mr. Sargent, of Jackson; Robert Robertson, Dr. Thomas Boyson and W. T. Jones, of Plymouth; Thomas W. Jeffers of Oleta; A. L. McWayne and J. H. Barney, of Drytown; James T. Wheeler and C. L. Haskins, of Pine Grove; P. Clutes and A. Cassinelli, of Volcano; Frank Frates and J. W. Surface, of Ione.

Butte County—W. E. Duncan and A. Ekman, of Oroville.

Calaveras County—Ira Hill, Richard Parker, W. H. Clary, A. J. Brooks and Sam E. Redmond, of San Andreas; T. T. Lane and W. C. Ralston, of Angels; J. J. McSorley and Mr. Burleson, of Mokelumne Hill; E. C. Loftus of Railroad; Mark B. Kerr and H. A. Messinger, of Gwin mine; J. Burt of Glencoe; L. F. Shepheard of Robinson's Ferry.

El Dorado County—J. J. Crawford, N. E. Pickett, Thomas Clark, J. M. Brown, G. H. Burnham, J. F. Lanz, C. N. Weatherwax, W. S. Mery, E. Bind, Max Mierson, M. Varazza, W. C. Root, J. H. Bradley and L. D. Greater, of Placerville; A. H. Tenbroeck of Georgetown; D. W. Morgan and A. Blanc of El Dorado; O. S. Buckbee, F. W. Williams and G. W. Harvey, of Shingle Springs; D. H. Jackson of Diamond; A. A. Wood of Newton; E. W. Chapman of Greenwood; W. H. Husband of Kelsey.

Los Angeles County—F. W. Edelsten.

Chairman Wolff read his address, as follows:

Fellow-miners and Members of the Convention: This assemblage of the representatives of the mining industry of California, entirely unpolitical and non-partisan in its character, is one of great importance, not only to this State itself, but to all others where precious-metal mining is carried on. Circumstances forced us to take the lead in California in forming the first Miners' Association in the United States, entirely free from all questions relating to labor troubles, or strikes, or wages, and devoted solely to the general interests in mining and the remedying of such existing evils as were detrimental to the industry.

It is true that the original purpose of the organization was to endeavor to rehabilitate hydraulic mining in our own State, but it was soon realized that the objects of the association must be broadened, and in so widening the scope of our work we were enabled to accomplish objects of general benefit to all miners, whether pursuing their occupation in California or other States of the Union. In this way we were in a position to demand and receive the assistance before Congress of the representatives from other mining States, through which means more has been accomplished than had we carried on our work single handed.

Within the past two years another Miners' Association, similar to ours, has been placed on a working basis in the Northwestern States, including Oregon, Washington and Idaho, and our fellow-miners in those regions are prepared to co-operate with us and assist in carrying out any proposed measures. With the backing of these thousands of miners forming these associations, we are in a position to receive a respectful hearing before Congress or the Legislatures, with some reasonable expectation of having what we ask granted.

Before the formation of this association the individual miner was left to his own resources. No matter how much cause of complaint he might have had, or under what injustice he might be suffering, his single-handed efforts before the courts, the Legislature, the land offices or Congress, were scarcely heeded, and he could accomplish nothing. One man fighting for relief from obnoxious laws or department rulings, and demanding a change, would not be recognized as representing an industry; but when all of the class identified with that industry band together in a common cause and through these representatives demand relief, the department, the Legislature and Congress itself must listen to their appeals and give consideration to their requests. Under these circumstances the American people, who are more powerful than these bodies of their own creation, will make themselves heard where the cause is just, as was ours, and their influence materially aids in the accomplishment of the desired ends.

Believing as I do in the future of this organization and its continued power for doing good to the mining industry, I have thought it proper to recite as briefly as may be some of the facts connected with its earlier history and formation, since I am familiar with them from the fact of having had what I consider the distinguished honor of having been chosen chairman of the first meeting in Placer County, where the start was made, and the first president of the resulted California Miners' Association.

Being about to retire to the ranks and leave the leadership in abler and younger hands, it is well to call the attention of those of you who have swelled our ranks to thousands from a mere corporal's guard to the condition of affairs as it was when we began, and to those persons through whose early efforts this great association was made possible.

In 1891 Thomas B. Everett, a Placer County miner, who, like some thousands of others, had been having hard times of it with the closing down of the hydraulic mines, suggested to J. A. Filcher, editor of the Auburn Herald, the idea of calling a miners' meeting at Auburn, with a view of holding a county miners' convention, and ultimately one of the miners of the whole State, to consider the condition of the hydraulic miners and, if possible, afford them some relief. On the 18th of November, 1891, this meeting was held, and resulted in the Placer County Miners' convention at Auburn, November 28, to prepare for a State convention to be held on January 20, 1892.

Among other things a committee was appointed to issue an address to the people of the State calling attention to the deplorable condition of the mining industry and the measures of relief desired. This important committee consisted of Russell L. Dunn, Dr. M. Schaebel, J. M. Fulweiler, George H. Colby, J. B. Hobson, J. A. Filcher, J. H. Neff, Charles G. Yale, Dr. N. Martin, D. W. Spear and A. Stevens. After two days' work the address was issued for publication in the newspapers. It was an appeal to the people of California in behalf of the miners' cause and had the effect of creating a favorable impression, which was borne out by the results of the State Convention.

The standing executive committee of Placer County was given full power to promulgate the call and make the arrangements for the State Convention. This committee consisted of Charles G. Yale, John B. Hobson, B. F. Hartley, John Spaulding and myself. It so happened that Mr. Yale, who was at that time editor of the Mining and Scientific Press, was the only man from San Francisco who attended the Placer County Miners' Convention, and he was placed upon the executive committee and entrusted with organizing the work in San Francisco. It was realized that without the aid of the people and press of the metropolis of California little or nothing could be accomplished. It shows what the general feeling was at that time against hydraulic mining when it is stated that it was only with the greatest difficulty any one could be induced to take any leading part in the movement to rehabilitate it or give it any countenance whatever. Mr. Yale was greatly aided in his missionary work by William C. Ralston, Robert McMurray, Thomas B. Church and a few others, but though many promised support, at the first meeting held to consider the subject there were only sixteen men in this great City who attended or paid any attention to the matter.

Just think of it, gentlemen. In a State founded on its gold mines, in a great City built by the gold mines, filled with millionaires and merchants who had made their fortunes in mining, only sixteen men could be found at that time who were willing to come forward and lend their names and influence toward rehabilitating a branch of the industry, fallen into decadence through adverse judicial decision, and which had formerly poured ten millions of dollars in new gold annually into the channels of trade in this City. Here was an investment of one hundred millions of dollars lying idle in our midst, unproductive, unused and valueless. We were not about to ask to recommence our operations on the former basis and permit our tailings to go where they would—into the rivers or onto the farming lands. That time had passed, and no one recognized it more than ourselves.

Poverty, distress, loss of property, litigation and bitter controversy were hard schools of experience, but we had been ours. Idle men, deserted mining camps, crumbling ditches and reservoirs, rusted pipe lines, empty dwellings, abandoned diggings and the almost depopulation of what had been formerly prosperous mining sections had brought despair to thousands throughout the mountains of California. Their only gleam of hope lay in a recently published report of a commission of Government engineers, the first favorable sign for years of the possibility of resumption of operations in the hydraulic mining regions. They were about to meet together to ask the people of the City and the State for their assistance before Congress in favor of measures looking to the relief of this great industry, once so productive, now fallen into decay. And yet what a beggarly gathering in numbers was this first meeting in San Francisco to inaugurate such a movement. It is scarcely conceivable in the light of what followed, and was discouraging in the extreme.

So bitter had been the controversy on the debris question and so long continued the litigation that a strong prejudice existed against the hydraulic miners which was strengthened by their having lost the fight in the courts. The great opposing influence of the successful and powerful Anti-Debris Association of the valleys had fostered this prejudice and increased it. The growth in power and wealth of the agricultural interests of the State and the decadence in the mining industry, due greatly to the enforced closing down of these very mines, had caused many to throw their influence against the miners' side. The press was either actively opposed to the miner or silent regarding him and his industry. Public opinion was not in his favor. It was thought that agriculture and horticulture had almost entirely supplanted the search for gold, and these were the reasons for the small success of our first efforts in San Francisco.

But those who had the work in hand were not dismayed. As one who was appointed a delegate from San Francisco to the State convention declined or few dropped aside another was chosen in his place, until finally the full quota was obtained. In the mountains they were eager to come and no man resigned, for they realized all there was at stake.

Finally, on January 20, 1892, the first State convention of the miners of California was held in San Francisco, and was an overwhelming success. There was a complete revulsion of popular feeling. Even our old enemies, the valley men, held out a helping hand on becoming convinced of the sincerity of our intentions and our desire to resume the mining work only where the conditions were such as to permit it being carried on without material injury to the navigable streams or the lands along the banks. The resolutions and memorials adopted by the convention were dignified and conservative, recognizing the rights of others as well as our own, and the speeches made by prominent men were of a nature to assure the public of a cessation of the long-continued controversy and an amicable settlement of existing differences. Care was taken in the appointment of the more important of the committees to select conservative men and to place upon them not only the miners but representatives of the valley interests as well, that there should be full and free discussion of the subjects and that both interests should have voice in our deliberations. That the course and policy was the best was proven by the results obtained.

As an instance may be cited the case of the committee on memorial charged with the duty of preparing a memorial to Congress, in which the hydraulic mining situation in California should be set forth and measures of relief suggested. This was the important committee of the convention, for unless a memorial could be drawn which would be satisfactory to men of both mountain and valley their differences could not be well adjusted at that time and controversy instead of amity would result. This committee consisted of twenty-five members, miners and anti-debris men being both represented. After a long discussion of points involved it was finally decided to select two men, one representing each interest, to draft this important document, and they were left to themselves to do this work, the rest of the committee retiring. Robert T. Devlin of Sacramento, the attorney of the Anti-Debris Association, was selected on the part of the farmers and Charles G. Yale of San Francisco to represent the miners of California. It was the first time in years that the representatives of these two contending factions had been brought together on friendly terms and with a common object in view. So amicably and well was the work performed that the committee reported favorably on the memorial at once and the convention adopted it unanimously.

It was the expression not only of the miners of California, but of the farmers as well, and formed the basis for the measures of relief enacted by Congress, which once again set our ditches flowing, our giants spouting, opened our golden streams and rehabilitated the almost dying hydraulic mining industry of California.

Unity of action and fair-mindedness achieved a victory where individual effort, controversy and litigation had failed. Of almost equal importance was the committee on resolutions, which should tell the people of the State what our intentions and desires were and how we expected to accomplish our ends. And, moreover, another important committee had to arrange for the permanent organization of the California Miners' Association. I want to recall to you here present the names of the chairmen of these three representative committees of our first convention, because so much depended on their work and because they did it so well. C. W. Cross was the chairman of the committee on resolutions, Tirey L. Ford of the committee on permanent organization and Charles C. Yale of the committee on memorial to Congress.

When our first convention adjourned and we organized the California Miners' Association we at once realized that we had the assistance and moral support of the people and the press of the State. We were given a backing far beyond what was even expected. The Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Trade and Board of Supervisors of San Francisco passed resolutions indorsing our memorial and our objects, as did the Boards of Supervisors throughout the interior counties. The merchants and manufacturers of this city were wonderfully liberal in their donations of needful money to carry on our work, and money came from other places as well. The different county miners' associations responded liberally to our call for financial help and the California Miners' Association was fairly and successfully launched, with public favor enlisted in its behalf.

For these results we are largely indebted to the press of this City and State, for had it not viewed our efforts with favor we could not have gained popular approval. To the editors of California the miners of the State owe a debt of gratitude almost beyond measure. The Mining and Scientific Press, particularly, has always been our friend.

And the miners are under heavy obligations also to certain gentlemen in this association who toiled early and late in their behalf without expectation or desire of reward. As your president and a member of the various working committees I know that our objects could not have been carried out without their active and intelligent assistance. It would be impossible to name all who have been helpful to us in carrying on the executive work or upon whose advice and assistance I have so largely depended. But prominent among them have been your secretaries, William C. Ralston and Julian Sonntag. Both of these gentlemen have performed a large amount of gratuitous work for the association, for which we owe them our hearty thanks. Both have been enthusiastic in behalf of the cause and tireless in their efforts. We have had the best of legal talent to aid and counsel us in our labors, and without compensation of any kind; and I desire to return my sincere thanks to them for the many favors conferred on me as your president.

During our early organization C. W. Cross gave us most material aid in many ways suggested by his professional experience and knowledge relating to hydraulic mining and the litigation connected with it, and he continues to assist us to-day. Tirey L. Ford, as chairman of the committee on legislation since we commenced our work and as our Representative before Congress at the last session, has been absolutely untiring in his zeal for the interests of the miners of the State. It is unnecessary to elaborate on his report and the valuable information it contains, for copies have been placed in the hands of each of you. Mr. Ford's individual work in our State Legislature has given us laws of the utmost importance to the hydraulic miner, and his advice and assistance have been freely given on all occasions. A. H. Ricketts did a splendid work for us as chairman of the Committee on Mineral Lands as our attorney in Washington, and freely donated a large amount of his valuable time to our cause. Among other attorneys who have materially aided us with their gratuitous professional advice are J. M. Wright, E. A. Belcher, J. M. Walling.

We should not forget ex-Governor Markham, who, as the chief executive of this State, first called the attention of the Legislature and the people of California to the deplorable condition of the hydraulic mining industry, and suggested that measures of relief be instituted. The gentleman who acted as manager of our successful mineral exhibit at the Midwinter Fair, Edward H. Benjamin, also placed us under lasting obligations for the use of his name in the protests to prevent the railroad companies from patenting mineral lands.

In the early days when we were struggling hard with the Caminetti act, Niles Searls, John Hobson and Robert McMurray fought ably for us before the committees of Congress. In the collection of necessary funds we have been greatly aided by Samuel K. Thornton, Louis Glass, W. W. Montague, Dan T. Cole and others.

The Board of Trade of San Francisco, more than any other single body, has advanced our financial interests, and helped bring light to many dark days with us. Among other active and tireless workers in our behalf have been John McMurray, Harold T. Power, Thomas R. Church, Edward Coleman, Andrew Carrigan, S. B. Christy, S. J. Hendy, Charles F. Hoffman, J. P. Parks, R. R. Grayson, E. C. Loftus, Henry Pichoir, Felix Chappelet, R. C. Hart, E. W. Chapman, W. R. Thomas and James O'Brien.

I should be derelict in my duty did I not mention specially the very intelligent and constant services performed by one who is best known to us all as "Charley" Yale. As one of the organizers of this movement in behalf of the miners of California, he has been one of my most valued assistants on the executive and other important standing committees, has never faltered in his zeal, and never failed to do any amount of work for which we called upon him. With a thorough knowledge of the subjects before us, and a ready pen, he has not only greatly assisted us in the preparation of numerous important documents, resolutions, etc., but has ably fought our battles in the public press, and helped to enlist its influence in our behalf. The conservative and successful policy carried out in the administration of our affairs is largely due to his advice and method of bringing them before the public in the beginning. I freely acknowledge my own obligations for his valuable assistance in many ways, and assure you that he deserves the thanks of the Association of the Miners of California.

I undertake to say that no organization has ever accomplished such important results with such small expenditure. No officer of the association has received one dollar from the treasury for professional services, nor has any one else connected with the management of its affairs.

Being about to retire from the presidency of your association I have thought it my duty, as it is my pleasure, to recall to you the names of those more prominent in the conduct of its affairs in the past since I have been in a position to see and recognize the services they have performed. I desire to return my sincere thanks to all of them for the many favors extended to me as your president, and thank them also in behalf of the association, to whose success they have so largely contributed. As I view the future of this association I have every confidence in it. There are many measures which will be of benefit to the mining industry of the State which still demand consideration at your hands. Prominent among them are the needs of a representative of the mining industry in the councils of the Nation, for there should be a Secretary of Mines in the Cabinet, that our large and growing interests should be guarded. Moreover, closer at home, there should be in the State University, where there is already a college of mines and professors of mining, one or more representatives of the mining interests in the Board of Regents.

You should continue to lend your moral support and influence to the maintenance of the State Mining Bureau, which is now doing useful work in behalf of the mining industry of the State. This institution should be fostered and encouraged in every way by all of us. On our mineral lands bill in Congress let us not falter or hesitate. Public opinion is with us in this matter, and Congress has been "educated" on the question. The measure cannot fail of passage. We only ask that the railroad companies be prevented from acquiring any more mineral lands in this State, which were, by their land grants, expressly reserved for the miners. Other lands were given them for such mineral tracts set aside, so they have no real cause of complaint. It is but just that the mineral lands, set aside as the domain for the miner and prospector, should be kept for them as intended, and it rests mainly with this association to contest the false claims of the railroad companies, have the lands properly classified and leave the mineral for the prospector of the future, for whom Congress plainly intended it.

Numerous changes in the mining laws seem necessary for the protection of the miner's interests and the proper conduct of his business. All such proposed amendments should be carefully considered by your committee on legislation before receiving the indorsement of this association, in order that when our requests finally come before Congress they shall have been well thought out and properly represent the desires of the miners of the State.

We are now in a better position to accomplish our ends than ever before. The association is out of debt, and though we have no available funds they will doubtless be forthcoming when the necessity arises. The mineral lands bill, which failed of passage at the last session of Congress, is on file as "unfinished business" and will come up for consideration at the next session in December. It can surely be passed if our members in the House of Representatives will take the matter in hand promptly. The appropriation of $250,000 by the State and of another $250,000 by Congress are now available and being expended in the improvement of the rivers and the construction of dams to prevent further encroachment of debris now in the streams upon the navigable portions. Many hydraulic mines are now being operated under the provisions of the Caminetti law, and their number is daily increasing. We have now a State Debris Commission, which is co-operating with the Federal commission in the conduct of the work of rehabilitating these mines. All these things are the direct results of the efforts of this association.

I am sure that we ought to all feel somewhat proud of the result of our efforts in behalf of our chosen industry. Our experience shows that it only needed united effort to accomplish what was at one time supposed to be almost impossible. The public and the press, then misinformed, only needed to be intelligently told of the true condition of affairs and what was necessary to remedy them, when their sympathies were at once enlisted in our behalf and we received their active assistance and influence. And gentlemen, we have been true to our promises. We have so succeeded in conducting the hydraulic-mining business as to work no injury to any man or any interest. We have asked for no radical changes in the law, but simply pressed the enforcement of those existing. Those for which we may ask in the future are simply such as experience shows are necessary for the progress of the mining industry. They will interfere with no one else's affairs in any way, and only relate to methods of conducting our own business.

I have great faith in the future of the mining industry of California. This great industry is now advancing with rapid strides and increasing its product between two and three millions of dollars every year. Those noble mountains which overlook our great valleys and form the backbone of the State are daily yielding their golden treasures to the enrichment of us all. More still remains hidden than has ever been taken out and there is work for the sturdy miner for years to come. The blows of his pick will resound and re-echo through those grand old canyons and ravines long after all of us here present shall have passed from the scene of our labors. Let us hope that the work we have accomplished and what we are to do to-day will bring results from which the miner of the future will derive a benefit and cause him to pause in his work and thank the Miners' Association of California for what it did in his behalf.

A delegate offered three cheers for Chairman Neff, which were given with a will.

On motion of Niles Searls the secretary was authorized to have 5000 copies of the chairman's address published.

A telegram was received from Marion de Vries, Congressman-elect from Stockton, regretting that business would prevent his attendance on the convention.

Tirey L. Ford read the following report of his work in Washington:

The movement for the rehabilitation of the hydraulic mining industry, begun with the formation of the California Miners' Association in 1892, has steadily advanced in public opinion, and has been favorably considered by the law-making bodies of both State and Nation. The foundation for ultimate success has been securely laid, and, with united and determined action upon the part of those most deeply interested, the final result should not be a matter of serious doubt.

It should not be forgotten, however, that the work is but fairly begun, and that much yet remains to be accomplished. An unfortunate antagonism still exists in certain quarters, though, happily, confined to narrow and ever-contracting limits. Our National Congress is slow to recognize the importance of the work, and is still in doubt as to the limits of its jurisdiction in the premises. Added to all this the miners of California are themselves not wholly in accord as to the best means of accomplishing the desired results.

The first matter that should engage the serious attention of the California Miners' Association is that of agreeing upon a definite line of policy to be pursued by the friends of the hydraulic-mining industry in their efforts to restore it to its rightful station among the industries of California. Either the policy outlined by the Biggs Commission and amplified by the Caminetti act should continue to guide the association in the future as it has in the past or a new policy should be definitely agreed upon that would bring harmony and increased energy to the cause. As one who has watched the cause through its various stages and has given to it a considerable degree of attention, your representative begs leave to suggest that it would be well to carefully consider any proposed change before departing from the policy which has hitherto guided the association, and to which Congress is in a large measure committed.

With a definite policy agreed upon, every energy should be directed to a proper presentation of our case at Washington, whence must come the final relief to which the miners of California are so clearly entitled.

Mr. Ford added that the report of necessity omitted something of the details of the work at Washington. He desired to express his thanks to all those who had done valiant service toward securing the results that had been noted. Never before had they realized clearly the results that followed from the union of strength. It was at first a herculean task and miners had to be gathered from remote and isolated localities, accessible only on the hurricane deck of a mule.

The association had reached the turning point of its career. By pursuing the right methods the mining industry would be known as it was never known before. They had secured an appropriation of $250,000, unhampered by a single condition, for the benefit of the hydraulic-miner and the farmer. Every member of the California delegation was entitled to the heartfelt thanks of the association. The miners' cause had also received many courtesies from Republicans and Democrats on the Congressional Committee, all but two of whom opposed the appropriation. They were Barrett of Massachusetts and Cooper of Wisconsin, who were of the opinion that it was purely a private affair, and they fought it to the very end.

The Secretary of War had given his instructions to the engineers, and at least $250,000 would be expended in the construction of restraining barriers in this State.

The bill relating to mineral lands of California was introduced in the lower house by Johnson of California, but the miners' delegation were never wholly able to convince Chairman Lacy of the entire justice of their claims, but fortunately they had some very able friends on the committee. Among them were Congressman Bowers of California, Ellis of Oregon, Wilson of Idaho and McRae of Arkansas. Mr. Ford added that the miners owed a debt of gratitude to Senator Du Bois of Idaho, but for whose act of friendship it was a very grave question whether the bill would have ever emerged from the Committee on Public Lands. Senator Pascoe of Florida, Pettigrew of South Dakota, Berry of Arkansas, Carter of Montana, were also good friends of the bill. Senators White and Perkins of California performed some very fine parliamentary maneuvers in behalf of the bill.

"It seems to me," added Mr. Ford, "that the wholesale denunciation of Speaker Reed which has been indulged in is wholly unwise and wholly unwarranted. In the first place it is not the part of wisdom to go with a club in your hand to the men from whom you expect favors.

"This association should appreciate that it is under a debt of gratitude to Mr. Reed. When the outlook for our appropriation was the most dark, and at the time when the River and Harbor Committee had actually voted not to include it in their report, Mr. Reed gave a number of our delegation a hearing, and being satisfied with the justice of our cause, threw the whole weight of his influence in our behalf to have that matter included in the river and harbor improvement bill, and to-day you owe him gratitude for that $250,000 appropriation. [Applause.] There can be now no question as to the passage of the land bill in the short session of Congress next month."

Mr. Ford read the report of the committee on legislation, as follows:

To the President, Officers and Members of the California Miners' Association — GENTLEMEN: Your committee on legislation begs leave to make the following report:

Your committee begs to refer to its report made to the association prior to its last annual convention, in October, 1895.

Since that time there has been no meeting of the Legislature of this State.

The Fifty-fourth Congress, however, met in regular session in December, 1895, and continued in session until June, 1896. Your committee, acting under instructions from the association, presented to Congress four measures for the consideration of that body. These measures were:

I.

A bill intended to reduce the penalties provided for in the so-called Caminetti act, being officially entitled:

"A bill to amend an act entitled 'An act to create the California Debris Commission and regulate hydraulic mining in the State of California.' Approved March 1, 1893, by amending section 22 thereof."

II.

A bill to amend the Federal mining laws, with particular reference to the manner of locating, holding and working mining claims, and the transfer of contests as to the agricultural or mineral character of land from the land offices to the local courts, being officially entitled:

"A bill to amend chapter VI, title 32 of the Revised Statutes, relating to mineral lands and mining resources."

III.

A bill looking to the segregation of the unpatented mineral lands within the railroad land grants in California, locally known as the mineral lands bill and officially entitled:

"A bill to provide for the examination and classification of certain lands in the State of California."

IV.

"A bill to appropriate money for the construction of works to impound mining debris and thereby to protect the navigable streams of California."

For an account of the action taken by Congress upon the above measures you are respectfully referred to the report rendered by your representative in Washington, entitled:

"Report of Hon. Tirey L. Ford in relation to his services at Washington in 1896 in behalf of certain mining legislation," which has been printed for distribution among the members of the association.

Your committee is of the opinion that with proper efforts the so-called "mineral lands" bill above referred to should become a law during the approaching session of Congress, which begins in December and ends in March next.

In addition to the work necessary to secure the final passage and approval of the above mineral lands bill, your committee deems it advisable that whatever doubts now exist as to the availability of the appropriation made by the State of California through the Legislature of 1893, should be removed at the approaching session of our State Legislature, which convenes in January next. The National Congress having made an unconditional appropriation which fairly meets the terms of our State appropriation, the State can now well afford to so amend the wording of its appropriation as to eliminate all conditions and contingencies therefrom. This to your committee appears to be of considerable importance and should engage the earnest and immediate attention of the association.

Your committee further begs leave to renew its former suggestions that our Federal mining laws should be so revised as to make them not only harmonious but in keeping with the changed conditions since their original enactment. In this behalf your committee begs leave to suggest that a work of such importance and magnitude should not be hastily undertaken nor left to the action of committees already overburdened with other work. Your committee therefore suggests that a special committee be appointed, to be known as the committee upon the revision of the Federal mining laws, whose duty it shall be to thoroughly examine the mining laws of the United States and other mining countries and to formulate and present to the association at its next annual meeting a complete code of Federal mining laws, to be presented to Congress for action by that body. Respectfully submitted,

John M. Wright, E. A. Belcher, A. H. Ricketts, James S. Farraher, Grant I. Taggart, Ross E. Brown, W. W. Kellog, C. H. Hoffman, R. McMurray, D. G. Reid, Frank R. Wehe, Hugh Craig, T. J. Parsons, Edward Coleman, committee on legislation.

The following communication was read and referred to the committee on legislation:

THE NORTHWEST MINING ASSOCIATION, SPOKANE, Wash., July 30, 1896.

Miners' Association, San Francisco, Cal.: To the end that science and industry may be more rapidly promoted without the increase of cost the Northwest Mining Association believes that a department of mines should be created in the United States Government as a Cabinet office, and to obtain the consensus of opinion on this subject this letter is addressed to the leading scientists and scientific institutions of this country. We believe this department would promote the mining development, should embrace mining, geology, irrigation, botany, paleontology, archæology, ethnology, etc.

The various bureaus relating to mining are scattered through several departments. Geography is a subject much neglected as are

A Group of Prominent Mining Men and Others Interested in the Industry. Sketched in the Convention Hall Yesterday.

1—J. E. Doolittle. 2—Robert Vandercook. 3—Judge C. W. Cross. 4—Senator E. C. Voorheis. 5—R. M. Clarken. 6—Colonel S. W. Backus. 7—Judge Niles Searls. 8—Judge J. M. Walling.

Proof

Of the pudding is in the eating, and the wonderful cures accomplished are sufficient proof that

Hood's Sarsaparilla

is the best—in fact the One True Blood Purifier.

Hood's Pills are the best after-dinner pills, aid digestion. 25c.

MINES AND MINING.

LECTURE UPON ABOVE SUBJECT ILLUSTRATED with stereopticon flash-light, etc., by MAJOR MYERS of Nisqu ally County, in Odd Fellows' Hall, at 8 o'cl