

CONCENTRATION TEST ON LE ROI ORE.

Mr. Rust, manager of the Tacoma smelter, convinced himself by experiment that much of the low grade silicious ore in Trail Creek could be successfully concentrated. On his advice the directors of the Le Roi procured the use of the O. K. mill after a clean-up had been made and shipped 21,000 pounds of ore to be run through as a test.

The character of the ore is different from that on which the value of the mine has been based hitherto. In fact it would be termed waste, being mostly diorite and quartz, with specks and nuggets of copper pyrites mixed through it. Assay returns gave an average value to this ore of about \$10 a ton in gold. The heavy excess of silica in it made its economical smelting a matter of extreme difficulty, in fact, the stuff, unless it could be concentrated, was worthless.

The result of the test was altogether different from what was expected. The test proved that the silica contained as much gold as the pyrite, and contained it absolutely free. The presence of free gold in the Trail Creek ores has all along been known, because, occasionally, gold has been caught in the screens in assaying the ore. But no one ever dreamt that any of the ore contained gold in quantities which could be saved by a free-milling process. However \$75 per ton were saved on the plates of the O. K. mill on the sample tested. The stuff was only run over the plates out of what might almost be called idle curiosity, the real object of the test being to find out what the concentrates ran. There is no doubt but it will pay to work the ore, as these concentrates will have a high value for smelting purposes. But if further and more conclusive tests prove that a large percentage of the gold can be saved by a free-milling process, then this ore of doubtful value becomes at once the greatest asset of the mine. And not only of the Le Roi, but of many other mines in the district. In fact, it will almost pay to mine Red Mountain in bulk, such enormous masses of apparently worthless country rock become immediately valuable.

There is one respect, however, in which further experiments are needful. In running ore from one mine all the time very great care in cleaning up need not be exercised, and consequently on the plates in the O. K. mill or in some part of the mill there may have been some gold which came to light in the test but did not originate in the Le Roi ore.

But once started on this line of investigation, which differs altogether from any hitherto taken up, the manager of the Le Roi will doubtless carry it on until the success or failure of the treatment is conclusively demonstrated.

The vital bearing of the experiment on the future of the camp was marked by the fact that immediately on its successful issue being known stocks hardened perceptibly and a better tone was noticeable in every department of business.

PROTECTED LEAD BEING EXPORTED.

Shipments of a considerable quantity of lead have recently been made from the Colorado smelters to Europe by way of Galveston, Texas, going to that port by rail from Pueblo. At present prices of the metal abroad, there is probably more profit in shipping lead in this way than in marketing it in the east, where demand is at present light and sales are made below the European quotations. It is a question, however, how far this trade can be carried on without causing lower prices on the other side. A good deal of Mexican lead, refined in bond, has also been going abroad, and there is a limit to the demand there. The Spanish mines were very active last year, under the stimulus of higher prices, and supplies have been increased until there is some risk that they may exceed the demand; although business is very active all over Europe.—Engineering and Mining Journal.

PROFIT IN LOW GRADE ORES.

The Leadville mines will probably be benefitted considerably by the increasing demand for the low-grade iron ores, of which they have a very large supply. Heretofore the smelting charges have been such that it would not pay to mine any of these ores which returned less than seven ounces of silver to the ton. These ores are now in demand, and the smelters have not only reduced treatment charges from \$1.25 to 75 cents a ton, but are offering to buy these ores at \$2.50 a ton for all running 45 per cent. iron and carrying three ounces of silver, an addition to this price to be paid for any excess of iron over the proportion named. Under these conditions very large quantities of this ore will probably be mined.—Engineering and Mining Journal.

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