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THE PROGRESS OF
THE MINERAL INDUSTRY

OF

TASMANIA,

FOR THE QUARTER ENDING 31ST MARCH, 1899.

COMPILED BY

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BY ORDER OF

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MINISTER OF MINES.



Tasmania:

JOHN VAIL, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, HOBART.

1899.



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FOR THE QUARTER ENDING 31ST MARCH, 1899.

Launceston, 13th May, 1899.

The following Table shows, as far as can be ascertained, the quantities and values of the Metals and Minerals raised and exported during the Quarter ending 31st March, 1899, compared with those for the corresponding Quarter of 1898 :—

	DURING THE QUARTER ENDING MARCH 31, 1899.		DURING THE QUARTER ENDING MARCH 31, 1898.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
		£		£
Gold won ozs.	12,171	46,250	9367	35,578
Auriferous Quartz and Pyrites exported tons	162	1429	69	641
Silver Ore exported..... "	3089	42,420	3327	38,795
Blister Copper exported..... "	1415	127,487	1125	78,750
Copper Ore exported "	656	12,550	16	376
Tin (metallic) exported..... "	487	52,129	543	34,752
Iron Ore exported "	572	515	548	548
Coal raised "	8007	6405	9632	7705
TOTAL VALUE £	289,185	... £	197,145

The total value is slightly less than for the previous quarter, but it is the largest yet recorded for the first quarter of the year, the returns from which are generally less than those of the subsequent quarters. The large increase over the value of the mineral output for the corresponding quarter of 1898 is in a great measure due to the enhanced value of Tin and Copper.

GOLD.

During the past quarter 8473 ounces of Gold were obtained from quartz, 292 ounces from alluvial, and 3406 ounces by means of Cyanide and Chlorination Processes. Total 12,171 ounces, valued at £46,250.

The following Table shows the quantities obtained from various sources on the different fields during the period under review, together with the totals for the corresponding period of 1898 :—

	GOLD OBTAINED DURING THE QUARTER ENDING MARCH 31, 1899, FROM				TOTALS FOR CORRESPONDING QUARTER 1898.
	Quartz.	Alluvial.	Cyanide and Chlorination.	TOTAL.	
	ozs.	ozs.	ozs.	ozs.	ozs.
Beaconsfield	4282	11	2224	6517	3706
Mathinna	3633	...	628	4261	4519
Mount Victoria & Warrentinna	460	25	...	485	<i>Nil</i>
Lefroy	46	...	554	600	383
Lisle & Golconda..	28	160	...	188	200
Mangana	17	17	<i>Nil</i>
West Coast, Middlesex, &c.	7	96	...	103	559
TOTALS.....	8473	292	3406	12,171	...
TOTALS for corresponding Quarter, 1898.....	7841	756	770	...	9367

BEACONSFIELD.—At the Tasmania Mine the 65-head battery was running continuously, but was only cleaned up twice during the past quarter. 5405 tons of quartz were crushed, yielding 4215 ozs. retorted gold, as against 8420 tons crushed, yielding 6252 ozs. for the previous quarter. In addition to this, 2224 ozs. of smelted gold, worth £4 ls. per ounce, were obtained from the chlorination, and the total output of the mine from all sources up to 31st March, 1899, was 449,365 ozs., of an approximate value of £1,632,000, out of which £685,071 15s., including £6000 during the past quarter, has been paid in dividends.

At the chlorination works two additional roasting-furnaces have been erected, and the capacity of the plant is now about 180 tons per week, the cost of treatment being reduced to about 12s. 6d. per ton. The tailings from the leaching-vats contain from 1 to 5 dwts. of gold per ton, and will probably be eventually treated by cyanide. At the end of 1898 there were 9718 tons of

pyrites concentrates on hand at the Florence Battery, and 8120 tons at the Tasmania Battery, total 17,838 tons, estimated to yield a profit of £90,000. The weekly production at the Tasmania Battery is about 100 tons, assaying approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. of gold per ton. The hydraulic pumping-plant at the main shaft is practically completed, and preparations are now being made to open out at 818 feet. At the new main shaft a depth of 711 feet was reached, but it was found impossible to sink deeper with the present 14-inch pump, and it has now been decided to fix a powerful Riedler steam-pump at 700 feet. Below this the shaft will be enlarged so as to admit of an 18-inch lift if necessary.

Seventy (70) tons of quartz from the North Tasmania Mine were crushed at the Moonlight Battery, and yielded 67 ozs. of gold. The main shaft has been sunk to a depth of about 430 feet, and a start made to crosscut for the reef at 420 feet.

Eight other companies are working on this field, engaged in prospecting and development work.

LEFROY.—There is nothing fresh to report from the New Pinafore and Volunteer Mines, where work is steadily proceeding at the deeper levels, but nothing payable has yet been found.

The New Pinafore Company treated 2250 tons of tailings by the Cyanide Process, and obtained 257 ozs. of bullion, worth £970. A small plant has also been erected by private individuals to treat the accumulated tailings in Sludge Creek, and during the past quarter 197 ozs. of gold were obtained.

Five other mines are at work with varying prospects, and several small parcels of stone, totalling 50 tons, have been crushed for 46 ozs. of gold.

MATHINNA.—At the New Golden Gate Mine 4280 tons of quartz were crushed during the quarter for 3473 ozs. of retorted gold. The pyrites saved contained 350 ounces, and 4337 tons of battery-tailings were treated by the Cyanide Process for a return of 399 ounces. The cyanide plant has a capacity of 400 tons per week, and is engaged in treating a large heap of tailings, estimated to contain 100,000 tons. The total cost of treatment is put down at 2s. 4d. per ton, and it is claimed that 83 per cent. of the gold contents is saved.

A new air-compressor, equal to 12 drills, has lately been obtained, and will shortly be at work. During the quarter three dividends were paid, amounting to £7200, bringing the total amount paid in dividends up to March 31st, 1899, to £226,400.

The Hatherton Mine (late Chester & Murray's) is let on tribute, and several small lots of stone have been crushed at the City of Melbourne Battery, yielding 60 ozs. of gold. Very little has been done by the Tasmanian New Golden Gate

Extended Company, but it is probable that work will shortly be resumed at the Golden Spur Mine.

Messrs. Doyle and party have erected a cyanide plant to treat the old City of Hobart tailings, and during the past quarter obtained 229 ozs. of gold, employing 8 men and 1 boy.

The 10-head battery from the Sunbeam and Twilight Mine is being removed to what are known as Marshall & Terry's leases, on the head waters of the Scamander River, about 12 miles by road from Mathinna. There are several lodes said to be rich in gold, and a practical test of these will be made.

At the Hickson's Mine, to the north of Mathinna, pumping machinery is being erected, but there is very little other work going on at present in this locality.

At the Salmon Gold Syndicate's Mine the shaft is down 160 feet below the main adit-level, and sinking is still proceeding. At the 300-foot level the lode in places is 7 feet wide solid quartz, carrying a little gold, but poorer than in the upper levels.

An adit has been driven 240 feet on the Lady Dora Mine, and it is expected to cut the Salmon line of lode in about 40 feet.

MANGANA.—The Mangana Gold Reefs Mine is still idle, and very little work is being done on the field at present. The recorded yield of gold for the past quarter was $17\frac{1}{2}$ ounces.

MOUNT VICTORIA.—At the Ringarooma Mine a large chamber, 56 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 14 feet high, has been cut out at the end of the main adit, over 1100 feet from the entrance. In this will be placed the electrical pumping and winding plant, which, however, will not be delivered until the end of July. Most of the stone above this level to the south has been stoped out, but 100 feet above a new make of stone, showing good gold, has been cut going north on the track of what is known as the Gumsucker Lode. The Company has purchased the Mount Victoria Mine with its 18-head battery. Five of these stamps have been removed to the Ringarooma battery, bringing the number up to 15 heads, and a 12-head battery is being erected on the company's freehold property at the New River, which will be driven by a 16 horse-power portable engine. During the quarter 340 tons of quartz were crushed for 398 ozs. of gold. The battery was idle during March owing to shortness of water.

The New Mercury Company crushed 110 tons for 58 ozs. of gold.

WARRENTINNA.—Very little work going on on this field, and no stone was crushed during the quarter.

OTHER LOCALITIES.—A trial crushing of 8 tons from the Wyengatta Mine, near Golconda, yielded 28 ozs. of gold. No

stone was crushed during the quarter on the Middlesex field, and no alluvial gold has been reported. At the Woody Hill Mine, on the West Coast, the tributors have done a lot of dead work to secure a good supply of water for the battery. Fourteen tons of quartz were crushed, yielding 7 ozs. of gold. There has been a considerable falling off in the yield from alluvial, but dredging claims have been taken up in various parts of the Colony, and there is reason to hope for successful results from this branch of mining, which is as yet untried in Tasmania. It will, however, be some time before any of the companies start dredging operations.

TIN.

The total recorded yield of tin ore for the past quarter was 713 tons 15 cwt., and the quantity of metal shipped 487 tons. These figures show a decrease on the previous quarter's returns, which is chiefly due to lack of water for sluicing purposes, but, owing to the great rise in the price of tin, the value of the output is considerably higher than that of the previous quarter. At the end of 1898 the London market price was £84 10s. per ton; but it rose rapidly, reaching £111 10s. on 1st February. It gradually dropped back to £106 10s. on 8th March, when it began to rise again, and at the end of the quarter the price was about £110 per ton.

WARATAH.—The output from the Mount Bischoff Mine has been well maintained, and during the quarter 470 tons of tin ore were obtained, as compared with 450 tons for the previous three months. One dividend of 7s. 6d. per share and two of 10s. each were paid, amounting to £16,500, the total amount paid in dividends to 31st March, 1899, being £1,545,000.

Four tons 4 cwt. of ore were raised from the Waratah alluvial, two tons from the Phoenix, and 18 cwt. from the West Bischoff Mine.

NORTH-EASTERN DISTRICT.—There has been a considerable revival of tin mining in this district, but during the greater part of the past quarter the water supply was poor, and the output of tin ore was, consequently, low. The total quantity sent away from Scottsdale and Boobyalla was 181 tons 15 cwt., as against 279 tons 8 cwt. for the previous quarter; the number of men employed was 161 Europeans and 180 Chinese. Several old mines which have been shut down for several years on account of the low price of tin are now being re-opened, but, owing to extensive repairs required to water-races, &c., it will be some time before they are producing tin ore.

The Briseis Company have completed their new head-race, carrying about 12 sluice-heads of water from Main Creek, but

this cannot be relied upon during the dry season, and a larger and more permanent supply is needed. Water was very scarce during January and February, and the output for the quarter was only 25 tons, but it should be considerably larger for the current quarter. At the New Brothers' Home No. 1 Mine the basaltic overburden is being removed at the rate of about 2000 cubic yards per week, but operations are much hampered for want of a convenient dumping-ground. The output from the Krushka Brothers' Home was about 30 tons, and 11 tons 17 cwt. were obtained from the Brothers' Home Extended Mine.

There has been great delay in completing the dredging plant at Derby, but most of the machinery is now to hand, and the work of erection on the pontoon will shortly be started. Several other dredging schemes have been proposed for working flats bordering on the Ringarooma River, but as yet nothing beyond prospecting has been done.

To the west of the Pioneer Mine a Melbourne Syndicate has secured an extended prospecting area of 1280 acres extending to David's Creek. They have a hand-boring plant on the ground, and an attempt will be made to trace the continuation of the Ringarooma Deep Lead.

EASTERN DISTRICT.—At the Anchor Mine, for the greater part of the quarter, there was only water enough to drive 15 head of stamps. The second battery of 50 stampers has been overhauled and the dressing machinery adjusted, and towards the end of the quarter 90 stamps in all were running. Several schemes have been proposed for bringing in sufficient water to drive 100 heads all the year round, and it is probable that a race will shortly be started from the Columba Falls on the North George River. Both the Government Diamond Drills are now at work, and three bores have been put down with fairly satisfactory results. A prospecting tunnel has also been driven 145 feet, about 25 feet below the open cut workings, and has passed through rich stone said to carry 1 per cent. and over of tin ore. With a plentiful supply of water, this mine promises to become a very large producer. The output for the past quarter was 25 tons.

At the Australian Mine 150 tons from the Dawn Section were crushed, and yielded 1 per cent. of black tin, but crushing has been temporarily suspended pending necessary alterations to the tram line.

The Old Cambria Mine has been purchased by English capitalists, and a start has been made to open it up: a tramway is being constructed to take the ore to the Liberator Battery. The length of this line will be over 4 miles, although, in a direct line, the distance is only about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

At Weldborough, 39 Europeans and 45 Chinese have been engaged prospecting and working alluvial claims under miners' rights, but water has been very scarce, and the output was only 15 tons 15 cwt. Scarcity of water has also affected the output from the neighbourhood of St. Helen's, where 30 Europeans and 12 Chinese are employed. A good deposit of stream tin is reported to have been discovered on the beach about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from St. Helen's, and large extended prospecting areas have been applied for.

At Ben Lomond, St. Paul's, 33 men are employed prospecting and doing dead work. At the Rex Hill Mine the battery and dressing plant are being overhauled and remodelled, and preparations are being made to take out 1000 tons of stone for a trial crushing.

WEST COAST.—A good deal of prospecting is going on at Mount Heemskirk, and if the present price of tin is maintained this will become a busy field. The output of tin ore for the past quarter was 3 tons.

SILVER.

WEST COAST.—The total quantity of ore sent away from the Zeehan Railway Station during the past quarter was 5516 tons, of which 2577 tons went to the Tasmanian Smelting Company's Works, and the balance, 2939 tons, of an approximate net value of £41,000, to Strahan, for shipment to foreign works.

The following table shows the quantities of ore delivered during the quarter at the smelting works by the under-mentioned companies, and the net price paid therefor at the mines :—

	tons.	cwts.	qrs.	lbs.	£	s.	d.
Silver-Lead Ores—							
Comet	930	0	3	25	804	6	9
Silver Queen.....	588	3	0	12	1658	10	10
Mount Zeehan (Tasmania)	307	15	2	1	2289	14	10
Smith's Section.....	160	12	1	15	1217	8	1
Sylvester	135	3	1	8	80	2	11
West Comet	44	9	0	6	21	9	1
Western	78	16	0	12	498	17	7
Tasmanian Crown	34	15	0	5	380	10	7
Silver Queen Extended ...	19	13	2	18	142	13	8
Silver Bell.....	18	17	2	24	76	15	4
Williams's Section.....	15	1	3	16	54	10	3
Sundry Lead Ores	44	3	0	19	117	8	11
Silver-Copper Ores—							
Curtin-Davis Proprietary .	103	12	3	18	601	9	1
Ditto	13	0	0	0	75	14	7
South Curtin-Davis.....	86	14	3	19	76	18	9
Rich P.A.	44	2	2	26	443	2	11
Total	2625	2	2	0	£8539	14	2

In addition to the above, the Tasmanian Smelting Company purchased for £59, 33 tons of zinc blende, which had hitherto been unsaleable.

It should be mentioned that the ore sent to the local smelters is not included in the table given on the first page of this pamphlet showing the quantity and value of the ore exported. The value will be credited later on when the ore is converted into bullion.

The smelting works are nearing completion, and the blast furnaces should be in operation before the end of the current quarter. The roasting furnaces have been at work, and have treated 595 tons of raw ore, producing 416 tons of calcined ore. Altogether, 5087 tons of ore have been delivered at the works up to the end of March last. The Company have already spent about £85,000, of which £45,000 has gone in construction works, £10,000 in railway connection wood-tram and haulage-line to lime quarry, and £30,000 in the purchase of ore and supplies.

A market has now been created for low-grade ores which would not pay to export, and the effect cannot but be very beneficial for the field in general.

The Western still maintains her position as the principal producer of high-grade ore on the Zeehan field. During the past quarter 722 tons of firsts were raised, and 7117 tons of seconds, which produced 595 tons of concentrates, the total output of marketable ore for the quarter being 1317 tons, containing an average of 105 ozs. silver per ton, and 58 per cent. lead, and worth approximately £19,500 net. During the half-year ending 31st March, 1899, 2576 tons of ore (including 133 tons on hand from the previous half-year) were sent away, containing 259,998 ozs. of silver and 1494 tons of lead. The bulk of this has been shipped direct to England, but small parcels of slimes and pyrites concentrates, low in lead, have been sold to the Tasmanian Smelting Company.

The main shaft has been sunk to 630 feet, and a crosscut started for the lode at 600 feet. Twelve-inch plungers have been fixed at No. 3 level in place of the old 10-inch ones, and a new compound pumping-engine has been ordered from Fraser & Chalmers, of Chicago and London, but some time will elapse before this is ready. During the past quarter the 48th dividend, 2s. per share, was paid, amounting to £6000. The total amount paid in dividends is £96,000.

The Zeehan-Montana Company have purchased the adjoining Tasmanian Crown Mine, part of which they had already worked on tribute. The output of marketable ore from the Montana for the past quarter was 845 tons, valued at £11,831 net at the mine.

At the Oonah mill 1889 tons of seconds were crushed, but no return has been received of the quantity of concentrates produced. The total output of marketable ore was 483 tons, containing 41,538 ozs. of silver and 305 tons of lead, and the net value received therefor at the mine was £6270, which is over £2 per ton higher than realised the previous quarter. This increased price is partly owing to the reduction in the charges of the foreign smelting companies caused by the competition of the local company.

A steady output of about 25 tons per week is maintained from the British-Zeehan Mine, and the output for the quarter was 204 tons firsts and 103 concentrates obtained from 640 tons seconds; total 307 tons, containing 25,775 ozs. of silver and 204 tons of lead.

A tramway has been constructed to connect Smith's section with the Zeehan Tramway Company's line, and ore is being sent over it to the local smelters. During the quarter 160 tons were disposed of for £1217.

At the Silver Queen Mine a number of tribute parties are at work, and 588 tons of low-grade ore have been sold to the Tasmanian Smelting Company. The first-class ore raised by the Company is sold to local ore buyers for shipment to foreign works.

The Empress Mine (late Grubb's) has been purchased by the Colonel North Company, and will, probably, be shortly re-opened. The mine is already equipped with a concentrating plant and a first-class pumping plant, and it is well worth further prospecting.

At the Oceana Mine, in which large reserves of low-grade ore were opened up, there has been a subsidence of the ground round the main shaft, and it is probable that a new shaft will have to be sunk. 930 tons of gossan from the Comet Mine have been sold to the Tasmanian Smelting Company for about 17s. 3½d. per ton, and a small parcel of low-grade ore was sent away from the West Comet.

Some high-grade ore has been obtained from the Rich P.A. Mine, and small parcels have been sent away from the Curtin-Davis Proprietary, South Curtin-Davis, and S.W. Curtin-Davis Mines, which are chiefly worked by tributors.

The self-acting tramway from the Hercules Mine to Deep Lead has been at last completed, and 122 tons of ore from the Mount Reid Mine have been sent over it. Of this five tons were sent to the Tasmanian Smelting Works for experimental purposes and 117 tons were shipped to England to be treated by the Ellershausen process, and the result will be watched for with great interest. Negotiations are now being carried on with a view to sending 5000 tons to the Tasmanian Smelting Works, to be

delivered before the end of the present year, and a start will be made to send the ore away as soon as the final arrangements are completed.

At the Hercules and South Hercules Mines steady development and prospecting work is going on. At the former large reserves of gossan and sulphide ore are opened up, and inquiries are being made as to the best method of treating it.

NORTH-WESTERN DISTRICT.—The tramway from the Magnet Mine to the Waratah Road has been completed, and the cost of transit from the mine to Waratah has thereby been reduced from 30s. to 14s. per ton. The railway freight from Waratah to Burnie is £1 per ton. During the past quarter 190 tons gross weight, equal to 178 tons net, were sent away from the mine, assaying about 113 ozs. silver per ton and 29 per cent. lead, and the net value of the same at Burnie was £2040 18s. 4d. Of this quantity only 143 tons appear in the quarter's returns, being the quantity actually shipped from Burnie.

Seven and a half tons of ore, containing 742 ozs. of silver, were sent away from the Mount Stewart Mine, near Hazlewood.

A start has been made to send out ore from the Devon Mine, on the Dove River, in the Middlesex district, but none was actually shipped during the past quarter. The cost of packing and carting from the mine to Railton railway station is £5 per ton.

COPPER.

At the Mount Lyell Company's Reduction Works 53,184 tons of ore were smelted during the past quarter, and the output of blister copper was 1415 tons, containing 1398 tons of copper, 168,842 ozs. of silver, and 5860 ozs. of gold, valued at £127,487 gross. The 9th, 10th, and 11th furnaces have been completed, and the erection of the duplicate set of converters is being pushed ahead. The aerial ropeway from the mine to the smelters was nearly completed at the end of the quarter, and since then has been given a trial run with very satisfactory results, so that the output for the current quarter should be considerably increased. The great rise in the price of copper, of course, very materially augments the profits of the Company. It is satisfactory to note that good ore has been cut in the No. 5 tunnel, the lowest point at which payable ore has yet been found in this immense ore body. During the past quarter the 7th dividend was paid of 2s. 6d. a share, amounting to £34,375, bringing up the total to £306,075. The number of men employed at the mine and Reduction Works is about 1800. Good progress is being made with the extension of the railway from Teepookana to Strahan,

and it is expected that this will be open before the end of the year.

At the North Mount Lyell Mine the rock-drilling plant has been erected, and will greatly facilitate the work of removing the over-burden in the open cuts. During the past quarter 652 tons of ore were sent away containing approximately 195 tons of copper, 7172 ozs. of silver, and 9 ozs. of gold, valued at £12,450. Regular shipments are now being sent away, but the cost of carting is greatly increased by the bad state of the road between the mine and Queenstown. The construction of the railway from Kelly's Basin is being pushed ahead, and a light-draught steamer has been built in England for the Company specially adapted for the Macquarie Harbour trade.

The aerial ropeway from the Tharsis Mine was completed at the end of March, and ore is now being regularly carried over it to the Mount Lyell Company's Smelters.

Four tons of native copper have been obtained by sluicing at the King Lyell Mine.

Active work is going on in the other mines of the Mount Lyell group, and several of them have very good prospects, but none of them have yet reached the producing stage.

RED HILLS DISTRICT.—The Red Hills Mine continues to open up well, but more capital is needed to properly develop it, and it is probable that foreign capital will be shortly introduced. Very little is being done in this district outside the parent mine.

ROSEBERY.—In this district there are only about 40 men employed in mining, and the Mount Black Proprietary, Mount Black Extended, Mount Black No. 1, North Tasmanian Copper, and the Berry Consols are the only mines now at work. The Tasmanian Copper Company are, however, opening up their Ring River property at the foot of Mount Read.

The Mount Black Proprietary Company has sent away 21 tons of ore for experimental treatment: 5 tons each to Wallaroo, Dapto, and Dry Creek, and 6 tons to the Tasmanian Smelting Company, Zeehan. A tramway is also being constructed to connect with the Emu Bay Railway.

Prospecting is still going on at several places on the North West Coast, and it is probable that work will be shortly resumed at the Eastern Proprietary Mine on the East Coast.

COAL.

During the past quarter, owing to the hot weather, there was a decreased consumption of coal which is mainly used for household purposes, and the recorded output was only 8007 tons as

compared with 11,107 tons for the previous quarter, and 9632 tons for the corresponding quarter of 1898.

At the Mount Nicholas Mine a 4-foot seam is being worked, but a 6-foot seam higher up is now being opened up.

At the Cornwall several small downthrow faults have been met with in opening up the new seam, but they are now getting into more settled country.

The following list shows the quantity raised from the different collieries, and the number of men employed at each :—

	Quantity raised. Tons.	No. of men employed.
Mount Nicholas	4256	58
Cornwall	2963	42
Russell	426	13
Mount Cygnet	247	4
Dulverton	115	7
York Plains.....	No return.	

IRON ORE.

There is nothing fresh to report with regard to this industry. During the past quarter 572 tons of ore were exported, as compared with 586 tons for the previous quarter.

The average number of men employed in or about mines during the past quarter was as follows :—

District.	Europeans.	Chinese.	Total.
Northern and Southern.....	999	—	999
North-Western	335	—	335
North-Eastern	241	180	421
Eastern	574	63	637
Western	4000	—	4000
Total.....	<u>6149</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>6392</u>

Value of the mineral output for the quarter per man employed, £45 4s. 10d.

The dividends paid during the quarter were as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
From Copper Mines	34,375	0	0
Gold	13,200	0	0
Tin	16,500	0	0
Silver.....	8212	15	0
Total.....	<u>£72,287</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>0</u>