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THE PROGRESS OF  
THE MINERAL INDUSTRY  
OF  
TASMANIA,

FOR THE QUARTER ENDING 31st MARCH, 1900.

COMPILED BY

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BY ORDER OF

THE HONOURABLE EDWARD MULCAHY,

MINISTER OF MINES.



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1900.



## PROGRESS OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF TASMANIA

FOR THE QUARTER ENDING 31st MARCH, 1900.

*Hobart, 10th May, 1900.*

THE following Table shows, so far as can be ascertained, the quantities and values of Metals and Minerals raised and exported during the Quarter ending 31st March, 1900, compared with the corresponding Quarter of 1899, and the previous quarter ending 31st December, 1899 :—

	During the Quarter ending 31st March, 1900.		During the Quarter ending 31st March, 1899.		During the Quarter ending 31st Dec., 1899.	
	Quantity	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
Gold won .....	11,726½	£ 43,974	12,171	£ 46,250	15,938	£ 59,692
Auriferous Quartz and pyrites exported .....	120½	497	162	1429	101½	887
Silver Ore exported.....	1532¾	30,940	3089	42,420	2772	35,210
Blister Copper exported...	1966½	178,316	1415	127,487	2827¾	255,580
Copper Ore exported .....	10	159	656	12,550	20	200
Iron Ore exported .....	1366	1366	572	515	1619	1703
Coal raised .....	11,284	9027	8007	6405	11,889	9519
Silver Bullion exported ...	340¾	13,087	...	...	869½	32,684
Tin Ore exported.....	2	69	...	...	23½	1851
Lead exported.....	2	30	...	...	½	5
Tin (metallic) exported ...	474½	62,681	487	52,129	649	84,586
Wolfram ore exported ....	24½	1056	...	...	99	200
Asbestos exported .....	51	40	...	...	200	363
Gold Concentrates exportd.	...	...	...	...	8	80
Oxide Mineral exported ...	...	...	...	...	6	6
<b>TOTAL VALUE .....</b>	... £	341,242	... £	289,185	... £	482,506

There is a decrease of £141,324 in the total value for the previous quarter, and an increase of £52,057 in the total value as compared with the corresponding quarter in 1899. The value of the output for the previous quarter was a record one, and the falling off in the past quarter is attributable to the scarcity of water, and to the New Year, Easter, and other holidays.

## GOLD.

During the past quarter 6844½ ounces of gold were obtained from quartz, 383 ounces from alluvial, and 4499 ounces by means of the cyanide and chlorination processes, valued at £43,974.

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 1899:—

	Gold obtained during the Quarter ending 31st March, 1900.				Totals corresponding Quarter, 1899.	Totals for Quarter ending 31st Dec., 1899.
	Quartz.	Alluvial.	Cyanide & Chlorination.	TOTAL.		
	ozs.	ozs.	ozs.	ozs.	ozs.	ozs.
Beaconsfield .....	3570	159	3008	6737	6517	8325
Mathinna .....	3129	...	991	4120½	4261	5767½
Mount Victoria, Warrentinna, &c. ....	31	...	...	31	485	958½
Lefroy .....	99½	4	499½	603	600	694
Lisle and Golconda .....	...	150	...	150	188	150
Mangana .....	9	...	...	9	17	20
West Coast, Middlesex, &c. ....	6	70	...	76	103	23
<b>TOTALS</b> .....	<b>6844½</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>4499</b>	<b>11,726½</b>	...	...
<b>TOTALS for corresponding Quarter, 1899</b> .....	<b>8473</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>3406</b>	...	<b>12,171</b>	...
<b>TOTALS for Quarter ending 31st Dec., 1899</b> ...	<b>10,338</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>4672</b>	...	...	<b>15,938</b>

BEACONSFIELD.—At the Tasmania Mine the 65-head battery was running continuously. During the past quarter 5340 tons of quartz were crushed, yielding 3570 ozs. retorted gold, as against 5585 tons crushed, yielding 4609 ozs. 17½ dwts. for the previous quarter. In addition to this, 3008½ ozs. of smelted gold, worth £4 1s. per ounce, were obtained from the chlorination; total for the quarter, 6578½ ozs. The total output from

the mine up to the 31st March, 1900, was 479,307 ozs. 10 dwts. from 405,685 tons crushed; value, £1,748,731, and the amount paid in dividends, £712,071 12s., including £6000 paid during the past quarter.

At the chlorine plant the four calcining furnaces and 30 vats are working well, giving good results. The capacity of the plant is about 180 tons per week, the cost of treatment being about 11s. 6d. per ton. The tailings from the leaching vats contain from 1 to 5 dwts. of gold to the ton, and are being saved for further treatment by cyanide. The weekly production of concentrates at the Tasmania battery is about 100 tons, so about 80 tons per week of the accumulated tailings are being worked up. The concentrates treated give an average of about 1½ ozs. of gold to the ton. The hydraulic pumping plant at the main shaft was completed some time since, but is not yet at work.

With the exception of the celebrated Tasmania Mine at Beaconsfield, the principal operation to which expectations are directed is that of the Australasian Asbestos Company's enterprise, though the present object of the adventurers is confined to the establishment in America and other places of markets for the mineral before exhausting their capital by mining or quarrying the material for too long a time before it can be realised sufficiently to assist in the large expenditure required for the necessary machinery for its complete treatment. There are five other mining operations at Beaconsfield, which are being carried on with energy in exploration at various depths from 200 to 400 feet, but nothing definite has yet transpired.

LEFROY.—The deep-sinking project at Lefroy, which has been for some time engaged in at the New Pinafore Mine, but recently suspended through the exhaustion of capital, will shortly be resumed by the aid of the State assistance provided by the Act passed during the last Session of Parliament; and it is to be hoped that the question of the existence of deep deposits of gold at Lefroy will be at length settled.

There are at Lefroy, at present, three other mining operations, employing a total of 50 men: two of these have, during the past quarter, had trial crushings of stone of 50 and 8 tons respectively, yielding nearly two ounces of gold per ton; but these very limited experimental tests cannot be accepted as guaranty of future success. The White Pinafore Company's shaft is down 200 feet, and they are now driving on the lode, and stopping.

LISLE.—None of the contemplated dredging operations have as yet been commenced. The old worked-out surface of the

gold-field still retains about 40 diggers, who are content with small returns, with the constant hope of discovery of something of exceptional value.

**GOLCONDA, DENISON, & C.**—Prospecting is being carried on with reasonable expectation of success, but nothing definite has yet been realised.

**MOUNT VICTORIA.**—A considerable amount of prospecting and preparatory or “dead” work has been done, and, I believe, some valuable new discoveries made, but the great want of water for battery-driving power has been much felt, and but little crushing could be done. On the whole, the prospects of the place appear very satisfactory.

**WARRENTINNA.**—Only three men are now employed—one on Bayley's Leases, and two on the Derby Company's section.

**MATHINNA.**—At the New Golden Gate Mine 4150 tons of quartz were crushed, yielding 3129 ounces of gold, and 1560 ounces were obtained by the cyanide process. The amount paid in dividends during the quarter was £6400.

**WEST COAST.**—There is very little gold-mining going on at present. A few men are obtaining small quantities of gold on the Madame Melba flat.

The practically almost unexplored region of the “Pieman”—highly-auriferous though it is known to be—is about to undergo further development by the Whyte River Gold-Dredging Company. The dredging-machinery and appliances for this venture have just been completed in Launceston, and only await transport to their destination.

## TIN.

The total recorded quantity of tin-ore produced during the quarter was 695 tons 3 cwt., and the quantity of metal shipped 474½ tons. These figures show a decrease of 143 tons 17 cwt. in the production, and a decrease of 176½ tons in the quantity exported. The short supply of water, owing to the exceptionally dry season, has largely reduced the output of tin-ore, and has caused several claims to remain unworked.

The output from the Mount Bischoff mine was 480 tons—223 men being employed. Three dividends were paid during the quarter, amounting to £27,000. The total amount paid by this company is £1,648,000, and the total quantity of tin-ore obtained is 56,875½ tons.

The Waratah Alluvial Company obtained 3 tons 1 cwt. 2 qrs. of tin-ore, three men being employed ; and the Phœnix Company 3 tons 2 cwt., three men being employed.

**NORTH-EASTERN DISTRICT.**—There has been a considerable falling off in the quantity of tin-ore produced, owing to the scarcity of water : several claims remaining unworked. The total quantity sent away from Scottsdale and Boobyalla was 148 tons 11 cwt. ; the number of men employed was 214 Europeans and 170 Chinese.

The Ringarooma Tin Dredging Company's dredge at South Mount Cameron has been completed and floated into position, and operations will be commenced immediately.

**EASTERN DISTRICT.**—The long continuous drought has very much lessened the production of tin-ore in this district also, during the quarter. The quantity obtained was 57 tons 5 cwt. 2 qrs., being a decrease of 97 tons 4 cwt. 2 qrs., as compared with the previous quarter. Of this quantity 10 tons 2 cwt. 2 qrs. were obtained from St. Helens and Scamander, 9 tons from Weldborough, 37 tons 17 cwt. from Gould's Country and Lottah, 5½ tons from Ben Lomond and Rex Hill, and 15 cwt. from St. Paul's and Brookstead.

**WEST COAST.**—About one ton of tin-ore per month has been won from the vicinity of Mount Heemskirk. There are some 30 men employed there on the New West Cumberland, St. Dizier, and Mount Agnew claims. Most of the work being done is preparatory, and it will be a couple of months, perhaps more, before any considerable quantity of tin-ore will be sent away.

## SILVER.

**WEST COAST.**—The quantity of silver-lead ore sent away during the quarter from the Zeehan Railway Station for export from Strahan was 1943 tons ; value, approximately, £40,000. That does not include what was sent to the Tasmanian Smelting Company, particulars of which are given below.

The output of the principal mines (including what each sent to the Tasmanian Smelting Company) is as follows :—

	Tons.	£
Silver King .....	1927	24,626
Montana .....	721	14,564
Western .....	714	11,982
Zeehan (Tas.) .....	559	9262
Oonah .....	137	2395

The whole of the ore sold from the Silver King mine was raised by tributors; and of that sold from the Zeehan (Tas.) mine, 334 tons, value £5968, were raised by the lessee company, and 225 tons, value £3293, by tributors.

The Tasmanian Smelting Company during the quarter purchased 4505 tons of ore, containing 3,400,000 lbs. lead, 170,000 ozs. silver, and 460 ozs. gold, for which was paid, delivered at the railway station, Zeehan, £26,000. During the same period bullion, containing 1,900,000 lbs. lead, 139,000 ozs. silver, and 440 ozs. gold, was shipped away. At the end of the quarter the stock value of ore at the works was £43,000.

It is understood that the Silver King Company is about to resume work, having purchased the mining plant of the M'Kimmie Company, near Dundas; the plant is to be removed and re-erected at the main shaft at once. The south-west end of the Town of Zeehan is becoming a busy mining corner. There are several tributors on the Silver King, besides the leading one— from which all the ore at present comes—the South King. The Zeehan Bell is working energetically, and there are, in addition, several other leases in the vicinity finding work for a few miners.

The concentrators at the Colonel North (formerly Grubb's) mine have been overhauled, and started working again. The Company is pushing on the underground workings, and has had the satisfaction of recently cutting what appears to be a new and promising vein of galena.

**NORTH-WESTERN DISTRICT.**—The Magnet Silver Mining Company has shipped 261½ tons of silver-lead ore; number of men employed, 38. The total output from this mine is 1326½ tons; net value, after all deductions, £15,913 10s. 7d. The survey of a tram-line from the mine to Waratah is now being proceeded with, and, when the line is completed, it will very considerably lessen the cost of delivery of the ore.

**MIDDLESEX, BELL MOUNT, &c.**—The tin and bismuth mine known as "Shepherd and Murphy's," now that a practicable road to the region has been constructed, has just completed its machinery for treating and concentrating the ore (500 tons of which are at present awaiting such treatment), and will doubtless prove a highly-valuable mine.

## COPPER.

**MT. LYELL COMPANY'S REDUCTION WORKS.**—The output of blister copper was 2416 tons, containing 2389 tons of copper, value £186,342; silver, 194,255 ounces, value £22,258; and

gold, 6972 ounces, value £29,631; total value £238,231. On the 9th April seven smelters were running. Besides the delivery of ore from the mine, purchased ores are received daily from the Lyell Tharsis and North Lyell mines, and, occasionally, concentrates from the South Tharsis drill.

Ore treated at reduction works.....	74,382 tons	6 cwt.
Purchased ores (North Lyell and Lyell Tharsis) .....	10,465	„ 14 „
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>84,848 tons.</b>	

Number of men employed—

At the mine .....	573
At the reduction works.....	1400
On the railway .....	315
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>2288</b>

At the mine, during the quarter, a vast amount of stripping of overburden has been done, and the usual amount of ore from the benches and underground workings has been despatched to the smelters.

In No. 6 tunnel, which is 100 feet below No. 5, the developments are—good silicious ore, assaying as high as 18 per cent. copper.

Prince Lyell.—The work at this mine has been confined to driving a low-head tunnel, which is now in a distance of 366 feet. The country rock is principally blue pyrite schist and quartzite of very dense hard nature: country in places very heavily mineralised, carrying a quantity of iron and copper pyrites. At 305 feet quartz leaders were cut, showing good yellow copper-ore: width of ore-body, 15 feet. At 348 feet another formation was cut, carrying iron and copper pyrites and bunches of beautiful yellow copper-ore, the width of formation being 18 feet.

South Tharsis.—The concentrating mill is working very satisfactorily, but there is not at present a sufficient supply of water. It is intended to fetch the water by means of a race through the land leased to the Royal Tharsis, which, it is hoped, will give the required supply.

Mount Lyell Tharsis Company.—This company has completed its first contract to deliver 2500 tons of ore to the Mount Lyell smelters, and has now entered upon a fresh one, and is delivering 130 tons a day. The air compressor and winding plant are completed, and in working order.

North Mount Lyell.—Work is steadily proceeding at the mine, and ore is being regularly delivered to the Mount Lyell smelters. Preparations are also in operation to meet the requirements of the railway. The rails are laid from Kelly Basin to the King River; there some delay will be caused by the necessity to erect a temporary bridge. As soon as that is completed the plate-laying will be continued to the mine and Gormanston. The contractors hope that in about two months the line will be open for traffic.

Crown Lyell.—Good work is being done on this lease, and also on the Lyell Comstock.

At the Mount Lyell Blocks the main tunnel has been driven over 1308 feet. Ore is being broken and delivered to the tip, ready for despatch to the smelters on the completion of the aerial ropeway.

The Glen Lyell, North Crown Lyell, North Lyell Consolidated, and Great Lyell South are also working.

At the South Mount Lyell the principal work done is the sinking of the main shaft on lease 91 M, and prospecting the ore-body at the 600-ft. level. The shaft is now 624 feet in depth, being 100 feet in solid pyritic ore, with a fair percentage of fahl-ore through it, assaying, in places, as high as eight per cent. copper, 3 dwts. gold, and 4 ozs. silver. On the whole, the ore-body is turning out quite up to expectations, and improves as depth is obtained.

At Mount Jukes and Darwin prospecting is being carried on. So far the results are encouraging, but the difficulties in obtaining provisions, and the want of proper tracks to the mines, have proved a considerable hindrance. However, the completion of the North Mount Lyell Railway line will greatly assist the development of this portion of the district.

A track from Birch's Inlet to Port Davey is being laid out, and, I feel confident, will well repay the outlay.

ROSEBERY.—At the Mount Reid Mine about 60 hands are employed, half of them in mining operations and half on the machinery site and on the tramway to connect it with the Williamsford railway station a distance of about half a mile. The machinery site, which is distant three-quarters of a mile from the mine, is being cleared for the erection, first, of an air compressor to drive the rock-drills at the mine, and, then, concentrators and reduction works as may hereafter be decided upon.

The usual supplies of ore are being sent to the Tasmanian Smelting Co.

About 20 men are employed at the Hercules mine in extending cross-cuts, levels, and other works for proving the lodes.

COAL.

There is a decrease of 615 tons of coal raised, as compared with the previous quarter.

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.....	4604	49
Cornwall.....	6094	66
Mount Cygnet.....	490	5
York Plains.....	96	2
on (No returns).....	...	...
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>11,284</b>	<b>122</b>

IRON ORE.

During the quarter 1366 tons of iron-ore were exported.

The iron mines on the Blythe River have been successfully floated into a company, with a nominal capital of £1,000,000. £30,000 will be placed to the credit of the company to cover the cost of the railway and other works. As soon as the permanent survey of the railway is completed the line will be commenced. Tenders have been invited for supplying 14,000 railway sleepers, to be delivered at the end of August.

WOLFRAM ORE.

The mines in the vicinity of Storey's Creek have started operations, and succeeded in obtaining 26½ tons of wolfram-ore during the quarter, nine men being employed.

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

District.	Europeans.	Chinese.	Total.
Northern and Southern.....	889	...	889
North-Western.....	308	...	308
North-Eastern.....	299	170	469
Eastern.....	697	63	760
Western.....	4500	...	4500
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>6693</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>6926</b>

Value of the mineral output for the quarter per man employed,  
£49 5s. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.

The dividends paid during the quarter were as follow :—

	£
From Copper Mines .....	68,750
Gold .....	12,400
Tin .....	177,000
Silver .....	8266
Total .....	<u>£266,416</u>