

per in one, who by all accounts, (including his own) has had no sort of experience whatever in judging the value of copper ore, and much less the yield of a vein composed of a large portion of foreign material besides the ore itself. I cannot, however, help remarking on your own sweeping condemnation of the general method in which the Mine has hitherto been worked, because so far from the past system having been "erroneous throughout" this summer is the first period at which the frequently contemplated tribute system could have been introduced at the Mines. Owing to the large quantities of stuff hitherto on the surface, it was absolutely impossible to set Tribute Bargains with the slightest hope of protecting the Company's property from being plundered. Had I remained at the Mines last winter I should have introduced the Tribute system this spring, but certainly not in the method you speak of trying in your Report. I should not, as you propose to do, have made the interests of the different Tributers antagonistic to each other, but endeavoured to identify them. I would not have made it the interest of the Dresser to make bad work and to waste ore in the Skimpings, or that of the Spaller to make rich piles and throw away a great deal, as refuse which, with care and attention, would pay well for dressing. Again I would not have made it the Miner's interest, while saving the ore, to deliver it on the floors at the lowest possible standard, but by identifying their interests should have tried to make the Miner save his ore, the Spaller do his work properly, and the Dresser raise his pile to the highest possible standard and with the least waste. At present it will, I think, be found that the piles dressed upon the present mode will be sandy, slimy, and of low produce, while the Halvans and the Skimpings will be richer than they ought to be, thus causing loss to the Company in both ways. Even in England, among low per centage ores, the proposed system would not work profitably to the Company, far less will it here, where the standard of ore, and the price of labour are so much higher, while the laborers are so much more independent.

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