

## ORE DRESSING.

To this department I have devoted more attention than to any of the others, but notwithstanding have never been able to realize my expectations. But the fact is, the capability of the machinery and apparatus for ore dressing has, like some other things, been over-rated.

The quantity of ore dressed during the last year is as follows :

	Tons.	Cwt.
Dressed from skimpings last winter, . . . . .	64	0
Dressed from Mine stuff in May and June by Captain Hocking, . . . . .	93	12
Dressed from Mine stuffs and wastes from July 3 to December 15, by Captain Davy, . . . . .	523	12
Total in tons of 21 cwt. . . . .	681	3

Of the above we had about 150 tons on hand on the 15th December, at which date the ground may be said to have been cleared not only of old stocks, but also, nearly the whole stuff broken, up to that time, the cost of raising which appears either against former years or last year. For although some of the tributers had been working under their present contracts some time prior to December 15, yet, as these contracts do not expire till 1st of May next, all the ore so raised, with the wages and expenses, will appear for and against the present year, excepting of course those completed tribute bargains of which you have a list.

What has become of the 4,000 tons of ore which figured so largely in the account two years ago is a problem the solution of which is both difficult and dangerous. But the simplest is, I am persuaded, the most truthful, namely, *it never was there*. One half of it having only an existence in the sanguine imaginations of the estimators. That the produce of the Lode has been over estimated we have satisfactory proof, and it is quite as probable that the quantity and produce of the stuff when laying on the surface in a rough state was over estimated also. However, it stands admitted in the last annual Report that with the exception of 250 tons it disappeared in the year 1851.

And now we start almost clear, with nothing but the Mine to trust to, and what we can get from the skimpings and some rather poor stuff at the west end of the location.