

Upon technical advice, the Midas Deep is to shut down the mine and mill, but operations will be continued upon the treatment of slimes.

Mr. Webber, acting as chairman at a meeting of the Transvaal Chamber of Mines, made a speech in which he bade farewell and paid a tribute to Mr. Reyersbach, who is taking up a partnership in London in the firm of Wernher Beit & Co.

Mr. Reyersbach referred to the general situation on the Rand. He admitted that there was a shortage of native labour for the mines at present, but thought there was no cause for anxiety. All the colonies under the Union would be bound to take the utmost interest in the mines. He announced that an equitable settlement had been practically arrived at with the Government on the bewaarplaatsen question on a sliding scale basis. He urged the discontinuance of the monthly reports of output, labour supply, working costs, etc., suggesting that yearly reports would be sufficient and, indeed, the more advantageous.

AFRICA.

Nigeria.

With the recent revival of interest in West African gold mining, the other mineral resources of the country are evidently not to be neglected. It has been announced that the Champion Gold Reefs of West Africa has abandoned its option on a gold area in Apollonia, and has taken up tin mining in Nigeria. Now, the Nigerian Tin Corporation has been formed with a capital of £100,000, "to acquire and develop alluvial tin areas in Northern Nigeria, and, as suitable opportunities may offer, to co-operate with existing or future organizations in the same field." The frank admission that the Corporation has at present no properties, nor even options on any, disarms criticism.

Egypt.

There is every indication of growing activity in the oil industry in Egypt. The most recent company to make its appearance is the Helouan Petroleum Company. The capital is £60,000, in £1 shares, of which £20,000 is set aside for working capital, and the objects of the concern are stated to be the developing and dealing with petroleum and other mineral rights in Egypt and the Soudan, the Red Sea Littoral and Sinia Peninsula, and elsewhere in Northern Africa. A prospecting license has been granted by the Egyptian Government over an extensive area to the south-east of Helouan, about eighteen miles from Cairo, and already strong indications of petroleum have been discovered. The license is renewable yearly on payment of £25, and royalties are payable to the Government as follows:—6d on every ton of coal, 6d on every hundred gallons of raw oil and 3s on every ton of mineral wax or other substances produced.

RUSSIA.

Increasing activity is reported in the Baku oilfields, and for the first nine months of the year the production reached a total of 367,700,000 poods, as against some 344,440,000 poods for the corresponding period of 1908. During September the output amounted to 43,800,000 poods. This was rather less than in August, a circumstance explained by the fact that the month is a day short.

Active development operations are reported in the oil districts of Southern Russia, the latest to attract attention being Maikop, which lies within easy distance of the Black Sea. Already boreholes have yielded highly encouraging results, and refineries are now being erected and equipment installed.

AUSTRALIA.

Sydney, Nov. 24.—Dissensions are reported among the Northern colliery proprietors, due to the alleged previous knowledge by some of them that a strike was coming.

A shipment of 3,000 tons of coal has arrived from Newcastle. The miners' congress has decided to handle it, as it is intended for use on the railways. Another shipment of 6,000 tons for the Fiji Islands has been intercepted at Norfolk Island and recalled.

The Southern miners are restless, and it is rumoured that they desire to break away. A non-unionist has been assaulted in the western district, and two strikers have been arrested.

The Southern proprietors have notified Mr. Lee, the Acting Premier, that they do not agree to the men's proposal for an open conference to discuss the principal questions in dispute. They are, however, willing to refer the dispute to the Wages Board.

NEW ZEALAND.

The Minister of Mines, Nov. 24th, declared that since the Greymouth miners' union cancelled its registration under the Arbitration Act he had been endeavouring to arrange a working agreement on this crucial point. He considered that trucking from the surface would involve an extra charge of fourpence per ton, equal to £4,000 on last year's orders. "We could not stand it," said the Minister. "I proposed reference to the Conciliation Commissioner or the Arbitration Court, but the men refused. We cannot see our way to make further concessions."

UNITED STATES.

Arizona.—The Miami Copper Company are attempting to enlarge considerably their ore resources by means of diamond drilling. The company owns 260 acres of unproven ground.

Washington.—The gold mines of the United States produced \$94,560,000 worth of the precious metal during 1908, according to the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines, which have co-operated in preparing an analysis of the reports from private refineries and Federal mints and assay offices.

The total gold output was 4,574,340 ounces, a net increase in value of \$4,124,300. Colorado led with a productive value of \$22,871,000; Alaska was second with \$19,858,800; and California was third with \$19,329,700.

Porto Rico was the smallest producer with a total of only \$600.

The Philippines show an increase of \$219,800 to a total of \$284,500.

Some States of the Union, usually not associated in the public mind with gold mining, make a showing in the reports. In fact twenty-one of the States and territories, not including Porto Rico and the Philippines, are producing gold. Texas produced \$500 worth in 1908; New Hampshire mined \$3,700 worth, and somewhere in the vast grazing country of Wyoming was produced \$7,600. The summary shows a net decrease of 4,073,900 ounces of silver, with a value of \$28,050,600. The total production was 52,440,800 fine ounces.

Montana leads with a production of 10,356,200 fine ounces.

As in gold, the Philippines show a remarkable increase in silver production. From 100 ounces in 1907, the production of the islands jumped to 1,300,000 in 1908.

A new safety lamp for miners has the lamp bulb enclosed in a large air-tight glass globe, and the heat of the light expands the enclosed air, creating considerable pressure. If the bulb is broken in any accident, the compressed air rushes in and extinguishes and cools the incandescent filament before the explosive air of the mine can reach it. A single-cell storage battery, enclosed in a celluloid case, supplies current for twelve hours on a single charge, yielding a light of between one and two candle power.