

Many factors of not much importance in themselves, but considerable in the aggregate, had also adversely affected the profit and loss account. It was proposed to pay a dividend of 12s. per share, or nearly 11 per cent., which he thought would be considered satisfactory. The question of interim dividends was one which the board had been considering for the last two years, but the matter was attended with more difficulty than appeared on the surface, for in the month of October—when the dividend would have to be paid—it was often impossible to forecast the financial results of the year, and unknown contingencies might probably affect the calculation. Referring to the Newfoundland disasters of 1894, the chairman remarked that the company had already received some substantial amounts from the estates in which they were interested, and, though liquidation might be prolonged, he felt more or less confident that the amount written off in 1894 to provide for the company's loss would prove ample, and, indeed, if all went well, that they might eventually receive something to the good. So far as could be seen at present, the prospects for the current year were quite satisfactory. The motion was seconded by Lieut.-Col. W. C. Western, and was unanimously adopted.

Dominion Gold Mining and Reduction Co.—A recent meeting of this company was held in London, Eng., at which special resolutions were passed converting the priority shares into ordinary shares, and increasing the capital from £170,000 to £200,000, divided into 200,000 ordinary shares of £1 each. The object of increasing the capital is to provide funds to acquire other properties and to carry on extended operations.

Big Valley Creek Gold Mines, Ltd.—The prospectus has been issued during the last few days of the Big Valley Creek Gold Mines, Ltd. The company was formed with a capital of £125,000 in shares of £1, to acquire and work four gold mining leases for a total area of 640 acres, in the district of Cariboo, British Columbia. The purchase consideration was fixed at £100,000, payable as to £6,000 in cash and the balance in shares.

MICA MINING NOTES.

The exports of Canadian mica from the port of Ottawa, as reported by the Collector of Customs, from 1st Jan. to date (26th May) amounted to 157,812 lbs., of a value of \$19,818.

That the value of our exports as declared in our government blue books is much underestimated, has long been recognized by those in the business. An instance of this came to our notice the other day in the seizure at Boston of a consignment containing 20,832 lbs., the value declared for duty being only \$200 per ton. As a matter of fact the car was found to contain on examination by an expert the following lots: 15,485 lbs. of a size 2 x 3 in.; 3,000 lbs. of 3 x 5 in.; 7,811 lbs. 4 x 6 in.; 3,196 lbs. 4 x 10 in., and 1,340 lbs. of extra large mica, the total value at the standard prices agreed upon by our producers for the sale of these sizes bringing the value of the shipment to \$12,668.50, a difference of \$10,585.30 in favor of Canada. We mention this instance to show that the volume of our mica trade is very much larger than we would gather from the meagre and incomplete official statistics compiled from customs entries.

At Templeton, Mr. F. R. White, of Boston, has had a force at work cleaning up the pits on the old Jackson Rae mine. There are some excellent shows on this property, and the lessee will commence mining immediately.

The Blackburn mine has been worked during the winter, and a steady output realized. We are informed that drifting from the main shaft is being successfully carried on. Mr. Baker, who had an ugly fall in the pit and a miraculous escape from serious injury, if not death, is, we are glad to say, around again. A force of thirty men are employed here, and an excellent output of good quality is maintained.

The Phosphate King mine, operated by Mr. T. J. Watters, which has been closed since January, is, we understand, to be opened again and worked on a large scale next month.

The McLaurin mine at East Templeton has resumed working.

At the Wallingford mine, which continues to maintain its reputation as our principal producer, work has been steady during the winter. Considerable prospecting has been done on the property, revealing reserves of value. The property is in excellent shape for working a large force.

The mining of mica in the Western country is a new business and but few really understand its management, and also are of the opinion that it requires expensive machinery and other appliances to handle it.

At Bakersville, in Western Carolina, forty miles from any railroad, is the centre of an important mining interest. The mica business is so commonplace and affords such small show of machinery that it is not unusual for one to be skeptical when told of its actual magnitude. It looks insignificant, and yet it is one of the greatest industries in the state, and has yielded fortunes to those engaged in running it. It requires no capital to set going; all that is needed is to own or get control of a deposit. It can be mined cheaply, as the labor of that region is low in prices. The dealers who handle mica occupy little shacks, which are amply furnished with a crude work bench and a pair of shear. This is all that is needed; a million dollars would not secure a better outfit for the work. The wild and apparently worthless mountain region, of which Bakersville is the metropolis, is the main source of supply for the United States. The town looks as if it might have been built of mica, or else stands on the site of a ruined city that was erected of it. It can be seen scattered in more or less quantities all about the city and suburbs. The river is full of the shining particles, and the streets and alleys are strewn with heaps of the refuse. Its formation is like that of stone, and can be seen cropping out in cliffs.

In the granite, however, it seems to have taken great pride in making its fancied eternal home, but it has been disturbed by the volcanic eruptions of the earth in ages past, and now it is being surprised by the agencies of man. It can be found in all sorts of blocks of various thickness and shapes, and can be split and resplit almost ad infinitum, or until it becomes the thin, transparent, flexible wafer of commerce. It is imbedded in or scattered through the felspar in blocks large or small, close together and far apart, and is blasted from the rocks with dynamite. The purer veins are found between walls of slate. It is taken from the mines to a little shop by means of various conveyances, from the shoulder of a native to the cart drawn by a bridle and harness steer. Here it is split into thin sheets, trimmed into regular shapes and is prepared for the market. The price varies with the size and color of the sheets. The Bakersville product is known to trade as rum mica. A two-by-four sheet, good, clear quality, is worth about 50 cents a pound, while ten-by-twelve will bring \$4 to \$6. Sheets of these dimensions are extra size, as the average is only about four-by-six. Rare sheets twenty-four by eighteen inches have been found. Occasionally a mine is found where the mica is too much scattered in the bedrock to make its operation profitable, hence there is a possibility of a man sinking a little money without the expected tenfold; but generally the expert mountaineer can tell in a few shots whether there is any use of fooling with a bed or not. It is not an uncommon thing for a couple of natives to leave in the morning with a box of dynamite and return at night with \$50 worth of mica. Blocks worth \$200 have been found after a shot.

The Dominion Mica Co., a new organization, has taken over, on lease, the properties of the Lake Girard System (T. J. Watters). The manager of the new concern is, we believe, Mr. F. W. Webster, formerly identified with the American Mica Co. Mr. F. J. White, of Boston, is understood to be the principal in the new concern.

A new and important use for the lower grades of mica is in the manufacture of coverings for boilers and steam pipes, and within the past couple of months large quantities of Canadian mica have been used for this purpose by the Mica Boiler Covering Company of Toronto. In the United States patent office there are over one hundred patents in which mica is mentioned as a non-conductor, but it is always included amongst other ingredients, ground and mixed together. In this instance, the inventor, after long series of trials and experiments, had discovered that the real virtue of the discovery lay in the mica itself, and not in any admixture of cements, etc. It was found that when the mica crystals were split and divided down until the films were as light as tissue paper, and then sewn or quilted together, that a fireproof, porous mat was produced which could not be equalled. It formed a cushion of innumerable fireproof leaves, each in itself an almost perfect insulator, and, when quilted together, an endless succession of barriers to the heat waves radiating from the boiler, cylinder, or pipe. It was found that no amount of vibration or sudden expansion affected it; that it was wonderfully elastic, and expanded and contracted as easily as rubber. Unlike the old-fashioned cements, wools, and cottons, used as boiler coverings, the mica mats were uninjured by water; a mat could be soaked through and through until sodden with water, but as it dried it rose crisp and elastic and good as ever. The great secret is that it is a natural product worked up for practical use without the addition of other ingredients, which are quickly washed out and disintegrated by damp, or shaken asunder by ordinary vibration.

The Lake Girard mine, in the Township of Wakefield, one of the principal producers of the Lake Girard system, has been re-opened by the Dominion Mica Company. A strong force has been put to work for active development during the summer.

Mr. R. L. Blackburn has acquired the mining rights over a property in the township of Hull, adjoining the Vavasour mine. A large deposit of fine mica has been uncovered here and a working force has been put to work for its exploitation.

During the past month there has been a marked improvement in the demand for Canadian mica, and all the mines are busier than they have been for some time.

Mining Camp Civilization.

The glamour and the romance and the devilry of the Western mining camp are fast fading into history. The rip-roaring scenes that inspired Bret Harte's ballads will soon, like the Argonauts, be but memories of a golden dream, when all men were rich, when fortunes were made and lost and regained in a day, when life was cheap and mining communities were ruled by savage chivalry, vigilantes and "red-eye." The tenderfoot who, from histories of the early days in the West, has gained the impression that a mining camp is made up chiefly of dance-halls, sombreros and six-shooters, and that life is one lurid round of killings, hangings, dissipation and disorder, is now astounded, upon coming to the mines, to find himself in a quiet, well-behaved and peaceable community, as well supplied with churches and schools and all the outward signs of Christian civilization as any New England village. While Satan has not been entirely banished from the mining camp, he is kept quite as closely in restraint as in the average agricultural community. Saloons still flourish and the tiger is sometimes exposed to public view, and gilded palaces of sin are tolerated, as elsewhere. But the bad man from Bitter Creek no longer kills a man each morning for breakfast; no longer is the stranger's silk hat made the target of every six-shooter in camp, nor the tenderfoot compelled to dance the double-shuffle while the bar-room floor about his feet is being plugged full of bullet-holes. The "bad man" of the early days long ago passed in his checks, and the drunken tough who now goes forth to terrorize a mining camp is promptly thrown into the "bug-house," like any other unruly tramp.

An old forty-niner returned from Mercur the other day, downcast and dejected. "It may be a good camp," he explained, as he squirted tobacco-juice at a far-away cuspidor, "but its gold durned quiet and peaceable. None of the mining camps ain't so lively as they was when I was mining." And this old man actually sighed regretfully over the changes that have been wrought by these God-fearing days.

The old boys will never again witness the high-pressure excitement of the days that are gone. Although there is occasionally some new camp in which the old spirit of reckless abandon holds sway for a brief period, it is quickly suppressed by the encroachments of civilization. Mining camps are no longer made up of bands of reck-