

part suspended—not more than thirty miners being employed. Of the five stamp mills, only one was in operation at that season, and even that was for the time undergoing repairs. This mill, belonging to Mr. W. Shaffer, was, we were told, supplied in part by the mineral from his own workings, but treated also the mineral furnished by other proprietors in the district, who paid at the rate of \$3.50 a ton for crushing and amalgamation. Mr. Shaffer had also a Chilian mill, which was then unemployed; but, according to the *Mining Gazette*, has lately treated seventeen tons of quartz with a yield of 23 oz. 4 dwt. of gold, and it would appear, by recent accounts, that there are signs of renewed activity in this district.

The workings of Oldham have generally been by open cuttings on the slope of the veins, sometimes carried to the depth of sixty feet. One of these, on the Hall lode, has a length of 160 feet, and attains, in parts, forty feet, at which depth the vein is said to be lost, but is perhaps only displaced by a dislocation. This vein is very irregular, and in some parts contracted to a slender seam, which is then very rich in gold. Besides these open cuttings, however, there are numerous shafts; one of these on the Britannia lode, which dips northward about seventy degrees, has attained a depth of 108 feet. There are said to be known in this district, about sixty parallel quartz lodes, running east and west, in a breadth of about half a mile. These lodes, corresponding to one-half that number of interstratified sheets of auriferous quartz, are symmetrically arranged on the north and south side of the anticlinal axis, with opposite dips. They have been traced for about a mile and a half from west to east, but in this direction disappear from the effect of a north and south synclinal. Several of the more southern beds, having a south dip of from forty-five to sixty degrees, are seen to curve gently towards the north-east, assuming a south-east dip, which, in one case, can be followed till it becomes east-south-east. Four of these lodes have been more or less opened, and workings were going on in two of them for the purpose of extracting the quartz, which, along the side of a hill, was easily removed by stripping off the overlying beds of quartzite. The surface of these layers exhibited, in a marked manner, the ribbed or fluted appearance already mentioned. These ribs resembling, on a smaller scale, those of the barrel quartz of Waverley, were inclined downwards to the eastward, at a considerable angle, apparently coinciding with that of the east and west anticlinal axis. To the north of the axis a single northward-dipping lode has also been followed till it curves southward and assumes a north-east dip, evidently turning around to meet one of the southern lodes.

The thickness of the lodes in this district varies from one to fifteen, and in some instances twenty inches; and one to the south of the anticlinal, attains several feet. The enclosing rocks here, as in the other districts, are quartzite, more or less schistose, with bands of slate. Several transverse veins have been observed in this district, generally of small dimensions, and traversing alike the quartzite and the slate. One of these, as described to me by Mr. R. G. Fraser, of Halifax, is worthy of notice, as an exception to the generally sterile character of these cross veins. It was traced in a north and south direction, across beds of quartzite, for a distance of thirteen feet, between two east and west lodes, which were themselves poor in gold. This cross vein was twenty-four inches wide at the surface, but diminished to four inches at eighty-six feet, and to two inches at ninety-six feet, where it was abandoned. It was said to consist of quartz with some chloritic matter and a greenish dolomite, all carrying gold. Mispickel and the usual sulphurets were also found. From 185 tons of the matter from this vein there were extracted 519 ounces of gold. Bitter-spar, holding gold, was also met with in one of the east and west lodes, and calcite, with small quantities of pink orthoclase felspar, was found in thin seams in the slates.

The old workings in this district are of such a nature as to be often very embarrassing to those who would undertake systematic mining. They have been carried on without plan or forethought, and it would seem solely with reference to immediate returns, without regard for the future of the mining district; so that the whole field presents an appearance of great disorder. This is the more to be regretted, as the structure of the region is such that certain preparatory labours undertaken in common, and well directed, would have greatly facilitated the working of the veins. The richness of these is such that it appears probable that a judicious and skilful expenditure of capital would restore to Oldham its former productiveness, and make of it an important gold district.

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