REPORTS FROM MINING CAMPS.

SITUATION IN THE LAKE SUPERIOR COPPER FIELD.

The Cut in the Calumet and Hecla Dividend—Peru's Copper Field—Iron Ore Shipments Ahead of the Record—The Arizona United Company's Purchase.

HOUGHTON, Mich., May 7.—The reduction of the Calumet and Hecla's dividend to the old basis of $5 a share quarterly has proved a sad surprise to many of the shareholders, who had grown to consider $40 to $60 a year the proper return, but the cut in dividend rate is not at all surprising to those who have kept posted on the trend of events in the copper trade. Copper is now selling on the basis of about 12 cents a pound for Lake ingots and wire bars, f. o. b. Atlantic Coast points. This price means that the Lake mines are not making much more money a pound at present than they were making seven years ago when copper touched the low-record price of nine cents, owing to the increase in wages, supplies of all sorts, machinery and building material. Only the best mines can make money at present prices for their product.

The 1902 production of the Lake mines should fall only a trifle short of 200,000,000 pounds, or more than one-third greater than in 1900. The new mines and new mills are getting into line as producers, and while it will take ten years for some of the new mines to grow to their full stature, their production is already a factor of importance in the output of the district.

The strike at the Mass mine has been settled, the men getting their wages restored to the old basis.

A large amount of capital from the Lake district has been invested in Western mines in the past few years. One Arizona property alone has stock to the market value of nearly $5,000,000 held in Calumet alone. Houghton county investors own a big interest in the wonderful new camp at Tonapah, Nev., and other mines in practically every western mining State and in British Columbia are controlled by local capital.

The assessment of $2 a share levied this week on Michigan was expected. The Michigan has spent much less money than the average new mine of the district.

The assessment just called on Victoria will be used to build a mill. It is the opinion of the management that the mine has now reached a stage of development where its future is reasonably certain, and that a stampmill is warranted by the present showing.

Despite a popular impression to the contrary, presumably caused by the recent sale of heavy machinery to the Trimountain, the Arcadian mine is not being stripped or abandoned. Machinery is being taken from the northernmost shafts, which were never successful, but the southernmost shafts, on the Douglass end of the mine, are in commission. It has been evident for some time past that it is this end of the Arcadian that offers the best prospects of future development.

PERU'S COPPER ORE BEDS.

BUTTE, Mon., May 5.—A report of a very encouraging character has been received from some of the Butte men who went to Peru in the interest of the Cerro de Pasco Copper Company, composed of James B. Haggin, A. W. McCune and a number of Eastern capitalists. The report, which was received in Butte a few days ago, says the Cerro de Pasco district is the greatest copper country in the world, not excepting Butte. Outsiders can have no idea of the immensity of the ore bodies, and the wonder is that Americans have not gone there before.

There is an ore body 1,000 feet wide and more than two miles long right through the town of Cerro de Pasco. The first 100 feet carries gold and silver, but the vein below that depth is copper, and runs from 20 to 60 per cent., with an ounce of silver to every percentage of copper. In addition to the copper and silver the ore carries a great deal of bismuth. No ore has been shipped that did not run 25 per cent in copper.

The ore is packed on animals to the terminus of the railroad, which is at Oroya, 138 miles from the mines, and is then shipped by rail to Callao, a seaport town seven miles from Lima, where it is loaded on ships and transported to Swansea, Wales, for treatment. The new company has sent to New York for seven civil and mining engineers and the railroad will be extended from Oroya to Cerro de Pasco.

Although the mine has been worked for 220 years, the deepest shaft is only 240 feet deep, or down to the water level, where sinking was stopped by the native miners. A mining claim is limited to 275 by 550 feet and is mined like a quarry. From a large open cut shafts are sunk on an incline, at the bottom of which steps are cut for the native miners who carry the ore up in sacks. Modern methods are being introduced by the Cerro de Pasco Company.

MONTANA.

BUTTE, May 5.—Herman C. Bellinger, formerly chief metallurgist for F. A. Heinze, has secured an option on the discovery of a North Carolina man, by which he expects to revolutionize the smelting of copper ores. Mr. Bellinger has just returned from a trip to North Carolina, where he investigated the discovery, and he is fully convinced that on certain ores the invention will do all that its inventor claims for it. He says that by utilizing the heat within the ore it can practically be made to smelt itself, and that if the method proves a success ore that yields but 1 per cent in copper can be treated at a profit. Mr. Bellinger is building a smelter at Vancouver, where the new method will have a thorough test.

About three miles out of this city a rich strike has been made on the Gemmill claim. The tunnel, which is over 200 feet long, tapped a vein at a depth of ten feet below the surface. The vein of ore is two and a half feet wide, and the ore carries a value of more than $100 a ton, 12 per cent copper, 52 ounces of silver per ton, some lead and $4 50 in gold.

Another matte furnace is being put in at the Boston and Montana smelter at Black Eagle Falls, which will cost $60,000. There are now four matte furnaces working at the plant, so the addition means an increase in the capacity of 25 per cent.

HELENA, May 8.—For the last five years Augustus Heinze, the rival of the Amalgamated Copper Company of Butte, Charles D. Mc Clure of St. Louis and James Breen of Spokane have been purchasing for cash and acquiring by location the entire area of the great gold deposit called the Porphyry Dike, twenty miles southwest of Helena. Tunnels and shafts sunk in different places the depth and average value of the deposit show that it contains an average of between $2 and $3 a ton in free gold. The McClure syndicate has been at work for two years developing water from the waters of the Little Blackfoot River. The plant is now under construction. The waters of the Little Blackfoot are taken in flumes for seven miles and a fall of 500 feet developed. Sixty or seventy thousand tons of this ore have been milled in small stamp mills on the ground and an average yield of over $2 a ton effected. The new mill will, of course, effect a better saving. The gold is free, clean and bright and can be saved by the free-milling process.

The American Smelting and Refining Company's new plant at East Helena has been closed by order of the great Guggenheim syndicate which formed the company. This the company declines to do, because it is opposed to its general policy of not dealing with a union, although the management has offered to discuss the differences of any kind with its employes as individuals.

CALIFORNIA.

SAN FRANCISCO, May 4.—In the Tom Gouge placer claim on the Klamath River at the mouth of Hunter Creek bedrock was reached 40 feet down and dirt washed out that yielded $1 to the pan. This is the richest claim that has been found in Southern county for years, and if it holds it will rival the placer claims of old.

Good ore has been struck at the Central Shaft mine adjoining the old North Star in Nevada county and the ledge is large. It promises to be a liberal returner, as the North Star mine was. Crushed Wood for now is at the end drift of Sailor Shaft and developments are encouraging. This mine is paid assessments.

The great Blue Mountain mine at Randsburg, the largest copper producer in the State, has been purchased by a syndicate headed by Senator Clark of Montana. It is said the new owners will spend $100,000 in improvements, and that a 100-stamp mill will be built in the spring of next year. The values are high and extend for some distance.

OREGON.

LAKEVIEW, May 5.—Development is progressing rapidly on the Blue Ledge, a copper mine in the Blue Ledge District. The ledge is said to be 100 feet wide and to carry good values in copper. A company is being formed to develop the property, and it will be given a thorough test. The discovery of a rich ledge in the Fort Rock country, which is said to be the richest in the State, is reported