

*Timber.*—The total quantity of timber shipped from the Greymouth port during the year was 11,783,292 superficial feet.

*Magisterial and Revenue Returns.*

Return of cases disposed of in the Magistrates' and Wardens' Courts at Greymouth for the year ending the 31st March, 1899: Civil, 185; criminal, 184; wardens, 27.

The revenue for the year amounted to £2,670 1s. 9d., made up as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Warden's department ... ..	2,398	6	9
Magistrates ... ..	206	5	0
Licensing fees ... ..	65	10	0
Total ... ..	£2,670	1	9

Particulars of revenue collected in the Warden's Court, Greymouth, for the year ending the 31st March, 1899:—

	£	s.	d.
Miners' rights ... ..	296	14	0
Machine sites and quartz-crushing ... ..	3	4	0
Business licenses ... ..	7	10	0
Water-races ... ..	23	7	6
Registrations ... ..	21	6	0
Rents and royalties ... ..	2,020	10	9
Miscellaneous ... ..	13	14	0
Fees and fines ... ..	12	0	6
Total ... ..	£2,398	6	9

*AHAURA DIVISION.*

*Blackball.*—Although no new ground has been discovered in this district during the year past, still about the same number of miners continue to work alluvial ground, and are fairly prosperous. On the Paparoa Range the Construction of the Croesus Company's battery and aerial tramway was delayed a good deal owing to bad weather and the difficulties encountered in transporting the plant and machinery, but the battery started work on the 20th November, and, up to the end of March, 750 tons of ore has been crushed, for a yield of 589 oz. 11 dwt. of gold, valued at £2,376 2s. The average of 16 dwt., though highly payable, is not up to the expectations of those interested in the mine, but it is anticipated the results will be enhanced considerably in the course of a few months, when the mine is well developed, a condition hitherto almost impossible, owing to the expense of transporting mine timber by manual labour. Now that the company's aerial tramway is available for the transport of timber to the mine, the development is being pushed ahead with all reasonable speed. The reefs are worked from the western slope of the hill, by means of adit levels, but the quality and size of the ore-body in the No. 1 level is variable, and, generally speaking, the reef is best where small. A winze has been sunk from the No. 1 level to a depth of 60 ft., on rich stone, and it is apparent that the lode is assuming a more regular course as it descends, and a contract has been let for the driving the second adit-level to cross-cut this block. The distance of the drive is estimated at 385 ft. When this work has been completed, the company anticipate being able to keep their 10-stamp battery working continuously on ore of useful quality. The battery is situated at the foot of the hill, and the transport of ore is conducted by means of an aerial line a mile and a half in length. Thirty men are employed at the mine works, and six men serve the work connected with the tramway and battery.

*Poneke Company.*—A cross-cut has been put in on this property some 400 ft., but without any good results, and at present work is confined to surface-prospecting.

*Sunlight Company.*—A cross-cut has been driven 500 ft. on this property, with a view of getting on to the lode which is being worked by the Croesus Company; but so far no good result has been secured, and work has been abandoned for the present.

*Taffy Company.*—This company has been engaged in testing a belt of country falling into the Ten-mile Creek. The rock is intersected with rich quartz-leaders, from which a couple of men recent dollied over 20 oz. of gold in a few weeks with primitive appliances. The company had driven several cross-cuts, with a view of locating the parent lode, but the country has been much disturbed by natural upheaval, and, though the gold continues to exist in the broken rock for a depth of 50 ft., nothing in the way of a defined ore-body has been discovered. It is the intention of the company to erect a 5-stamp mill to work the gold-bearing rock already proven, and to carry on extensive operations with a view of discovering a solid body of ore. The plans for the battery and accompanying works are in course of preparation, and the work will be proceeded with when these are completed.

*Homeward Bound and Red Lion.*—These claims are adjacent to the Taffy Lease. Rich leaders have been found on both leases. A very considerable amount of work has been done in prospecting by means of cross-cuts and surface-trenches, and an adit level has been driven several hundreds of feet on a formation in which gold-bearing quartz is frequently obtainable; but nothing of an appreciable size has been discovered as yet. The work has been pushed ahead with vigour under adverse conditions, owing to the difficulties of transporting stores, &c., in this inaccessible place, and it is very probable that the results will justify the enterprise shown.

*Alpha Company.*—The remarks regarding the last-mentioned claims apply also to the Alpha Company's property. A good deal of work has been carried out, and is still being pushed forward with commendable perseverance.