

Nothing has been done towards the development of the gold-bearing terraces existing alongside the Wakamarina. Probably the place where the large earnings mentioned above are obtained is the outlet of one of the terrace leads: I believe it to be so, and the find may possibly be the means of inducing some party to commence initiatory works with a view of obtaining Government assistance, to procure a supply of water, so often mentioned by me as being all that is required to give remunerative employment to a considerable number of miners on these terraces.

Wairau.—I have no change to report here: still the same population, about twenty men, earning good wages. There is every reason to believe that there is a rich lead in the Onamatutu Valley, but it is not likely to be opened by the present population, the valley being very wet, and almost the whole of it being private land. On a recent visit I was shown where as much as 100 oz. had been taken out of a small claim, but round about the same place no more payable ground could be found. Gold in the whole district, so far as at present tried, is exceedingly patchy, but the main valley is untouched.

Ravenscliff and Queen Charlotte Sound.—Both these fields are entirely deserted, the machinery erected at Ravenscliff standing idle, but I believe a company is being raised in England to go on with the workings again.

W. WHITEHORN,
Warden.

AUCKLAND GOLD FIELDS.

No. 17.

Mr. Mining Inspector GOLDSMITH to the UNDER SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

General Report on the Southern Portion of the Hauraki Gold Mining District, for the Year ending 31st March, 1877.

THE mining events of the year will be noticed in the order in which they occurred; some general remarks follow.

April, 1876.—The first occurrence of the year was the Ajax Company Battery being handed over by the contractors for erection, complete, to the company; they crushed 20 tons. About the same time the Tairua Company erected an engine driving 12 head stamps, great difficulty having been found in the transit, the roads being in a frightful state: this, however, was somewhat alleviated by the Government having corduroyed some of the worst portions of the road.

At Tararu the Little Agnes came on good gold, the quality varying remarkably in value.

The Waiokaraka Drainage Association, after a long period of inaction, started their pumps. This had a great influence for the better on the Waiokaraka District, so many mines having been flooded, the principal being the Bright Smile, the Queen of Beauty, the City of London, and Queen of May—all rich gold-producing mines employing a large number of miners. The Moanataiari, from No. 2 reef, obtained excellent specimen stone.

The Pumping Association refrain from sinking further at present, and spend the funds in hand prospecting at the present low level—namely, the 650-feet.

Mining generally is depressed, and many men out of work. About the middle of the month many licenses for licensed holdings for Ohinemuri were granted. Steam capstan started at Pumping Association, and promising quartz found in the 650-foot level, now advanced 32 feet. Morning Light (Owharoa) produces good specimens; a rush in consequence, and much ground pegged out.

At the end of month many miners leave for North Queensland. Tweedside getting payable gold. Red Queen get good gold; 27 tons gave 37 oz., and 21 lb. gave 91 oz.; likewise, Little Lizzie, from 120 lb. quartz, got 164 oz.

In May.—The Kuranui tributes are doing well—getting specimens. The Waiotahi mine greatly improving; 68 tons give 192 oz. Alburnia tributes doing well—Bartly, from 40 tons, got 74 oz.; Holt, from 30 tons, got 30 oz.; Red Queen, from 30 tons, got 103 oz.

For some weeks past the Tairua companies have been erecting machinery, the frightful state of the roads causing great difficulty. The Ajax, for a small crushing, obtained 108 oz. The Red, White, and Blue, for 22 tons, got 46 oz., and 90 lbs. gave 22 oz.; Alburnia, for 20 tons, got 38 oz.; Little Lizzie, for 20 tons, got 200 oz., besides 57 lbs. gave 58 oz.; Tweedside, for 70 tons, got 117 oz. At Ohinemuri the Young New Zealand gave, for 2½ tons, 27 oz., value £2 19s. 3d. per oz.; the Alburnia, for 9 tons, gave 31 oz.; the Kuranui, for 150 tons, got 221 oz.

The very boisterous weather, with heavy rainfall, greatly interferes with mining at Tairua and Ohinemuri by rendering the unformed roads almost impassable.

Miners, finding but little employment in the large companies, are much engaged prospecting, and in small tributes with very varied success, some scarcely paying, some doing well.

In June.—The Kuranui, Alburnia, and other mines are letting considerable portions of their ground on tribute, with great advantage both to the mines and to the miners employed: the rates paid by miners are from 10 to 30 per cent. on gross yield of gold obtained.

The Moanataiari, working on the 70-ft. level below the tunnel level, obtain good gold occasionally. In the Waiokaraka drainage the pumps, after various hindrances, have conquered the water. On this being effected in the workings of the Piako, Queen of Beauty, and City of London, it was found that the workings were but slightly injured by lying under water for several months, special precautions having been taken.

In July.—The Cure, from 83 tons, obtained 93 oz., and from 30 tons 56 oz.; the Don Pedro, from 30 tons, got 78 oz. The Piako, City of London, Queen of Beauty, and Queen of May, forming the Waiokaraka group of mines, resume work (after some months' flooding), getting quartz, having cleared out the *débris* occasioned by the flooding—the number of miners put on being considerable. The frightful weather greatly impeded miners, the roads being still very bad.