

up; part of the late Imperial Crown ground has been purchased, and, no doubt, more payable quartz will be found when it is prospected.

Golden Crown Mine.—The New Golden Crown Gold-mining Company are now the owners of this mine, from which such rich returns have been obtained in the past. Operations were commenced and vigorously carried on to open it up. The battery, which belonged to the old company, was purchased and put in repair in a substantial manner, a water-engine driven by water from the reservoir was substituted for steam power, and a great saving thereby effected in the working expenditure; the cost of which, including the price paid for the mine, amounted to £3,000. Crushing was commenced about the beginning of September, and from that time until the end of March the battery of 20 stamps has been fully employed, as will be seen from the following returns: 2,101 tons of quartz were put through for a yield of 1,933 oz. 19 dwt. of gold, value £5,152 15s. 1d. This amount of quartz came from various leaders and reefs which had been left years ago, as they were then thought too poor to be worked with profit, and also from some fresh lodes which were cut near the surface at the battery level. The surface levels have been cleared and repaired, the shaft overhauled, and the winding-gear put in good order. The 100-foot level has been thoroughly secured, and a great deal of driving done on the reefs, and winzes are also opened to connect with the battery level. The mine is well opened up, and payable quartz is available to keep the mill employed for at least another twelve months; the number of hands employed were on an average 31 per month for the year.

Queen of Beauty Mine.—The only work done in this mine has been pumping and enlarging and repairing the shaft as the water is lowered; this has taken up more time than was anticipated when pumping operations were commenced. The machinery for driving the pump by water-power has worked satisfactorily, and a greater saving effected than would be by using steam-power for that purpose. The depth to which the water is now lowered is considerably under that from where the big pump is raising it. Although the lower levels are not yet clear of water, the manager intends to let portions of the mine (to tributers) from which the water has recently been drained.

MOANATAIARI DISTRICT.

Moanataiari Mine.—In this mine a large amount of work has been done; about 2,000 feet of driving and 5,000 fathoms of reefs and leaders stoped out, the quantity of quartz crushed from which was 7,196 tons, yielding 4,769 oz. of gold, value £12,017 11s., on the company's account. On the part of the tributers a great deal of ground has been turned over, and 1,171 tons of quartz crushed for a yield of 2,209 oz., value £5,888 13s. 7d.: 108 men have been employed by the company, and the average number of tributers 60 monthly. Very little work has been done on the large reef, mentioned in my last year's report, tapped in the second cross-cut south from the tunnel; a rise has been put up for 70 feet, and the drive east extended 40 feet; as it is estimated that there is about 20,000 square fathoms of this reef over the level, the amount of work done is by no means sufficient to test it. In the Nonpareil cross-cut the drive has been extended for 900 feet, and a rise put up to connect with the old shaft, the upper levels from which are being cleared up and repaired in the direction of the Waitemata workings. In the Point Russell Creek level 450 feet has been driven on reefs, but the returns of gold have been as yet very moderate. The chief portion of the gold was from the leaders on the north side of the tunnel; these were followed downward from the tunnel to the 80-foot level, where they become poor and unremunerative. Rock-drill operations have been entirely suspended in further extending the main tunnel, and it is to be regretted that this is not kept continually going a-head, as in time it could be extended as far up the creek as the Alburnia Mine, and become the outlet for and effectually drain the whole of this part of the field down to sea-level.

Coliban Mine.—This claim has been successfully worked, and the run of gold is being followed downwards, the quartz yielding from 2 to 3 oz. per ton.

Reuben Parr Mine.—The low level is still being continued, but no payable run of gold has yet been reached.

Alburnia Mine.—This mine still continues to be one of the most profitable, and furnishes employment for a large number of men: 3,163 loads of quartz have been crushed on behalf of the company for 8,327 oz. of gold, and by the tributers 1,500 loads for 3,054 oz. 19 dwt. There have been 1,450 feet of cross-cutting and driving on reefs, and a great deal of ground stoped out in the deep and other levels. A drive lower than the Sons of Freedom tunnel has been begun, which will prospect the Watchman and Middle Star sections of the mine at a greater depth than the reefs have yet been worked. The Sons of Freedom level will be driven through the Whau ground in order to test the reef at the eastern end of the Alburnia. Another reef has been cut at the Whau level, which promises well, and operations for opening it up are in progress. A winze is being sunk on Dixon's reef to the 160-foot level, and a large block will be opened on it. The works in the mine generally are for the purpose of further developing those reefs which have already yielded rich returns, and the prospects of the mine are so promising that a continuation of success is almost to be relied on. The company's battery of 23 stamps is driven by a water-engine 35-horse power.

Whau Mine.—There has been a considerable falling-off in the returns from this mine compared with what I mentioned in my last year's report. The rich deposit of gold which was found near the boundary of the Alburnia Mine did not extend for many feet into the Whau ground. The mine is now being well opened up under skilful management, and payable returns obtained from branches of the main reef; and there is every prospect of sufficient gold being got to give profitable returns to the company, and enable them to employ a number of men for years. Several prospecting works in connection with the Alburnia Company are projected to test the reef at greater depths, and which will also be of benefit to the adjacent mines, more especially the extension of the Sons of Freedom tunnel.

Punga Flat District.—New North Devon Mine: The mine is now entirely wrought by the company, the tributers' term having expired in August. In conjunction with the Columbia Company, a quartz and mullock pass, with good ladder-road, has been formed to connect the present low level with the Sons of Freedom tunnel. This enables them to send quartz to the mill for less cost than formerly. The returns of gold have been very satisfactory, and, as the mine is well opened up, future prospects are also very good.