

There are several quartz reefs in this district, but no prospecting of any note has been done to determine their value. The lodes, as far as proved yet, are of a payable character, if a plant for treating the ore properly were near the locality. The lodes, however, may be classed as containing ore of low grade.

WAIHI DISTRICT.

Very little mining has been carried on in this district during last year. The Martha Company still continue to work their mine, although the quartz is of very low grade; however, it is found that the mine will only pay the company by letting it on tribute. The reef is about 30ft. in thickness, but only a very small portion of this contains sufficient gold to pay for working. During last year 1,414 tons of quartz were crushed, which yielded 535oz. of gold.

Union Company.—The only operations carried on by this company during last year consisted in sinking a prospecting shaft 130ft. deep, to test the lode at a lower level. An adit-level was constructed from near the bottom of the shaft to the lodes, which were cut at 64ft. and 78ft. respectively from the shaft. The large influx of water when the main lode was struck prevented prospecting being carried any further. From what I could learn, the quality of the ore at the place where it was cut was not equal to that found on the top. This company's mine, together with the Rosemont and Winner Mines, have been purchased by an English company, and machinery for treating the ore is now in course of transit to the ground. Mr. J. W. Walker, the manager of the new company, has recently visited some of the mining centres in America to see the principle on which similar ores are treated there. From what I can learn, the treatment of ore will be by roasting, afterwards crushing it in a stone-breaker, and Globe crusher; thence to amal-amalgamating pans and settlers, where it will be chemically treated. The machinery for treating the ore has been imported from England and America, and the pumping-plant has been purchased from the Dart Company, at the Thames, and is now in course of transit to the mine.

Silverston Company.—This company has not done much work in its mine last year. A winze has been sunk to the depth of 60ft. on the reef, which is from 10ft. to 12ft. in thickness at the bottom, but only about 5ft. of the hanging-wall side of the lode has been taken out and sent to the crushing-battery. The quantity of water met with at the bottom of the winze prevented sinking operations from being carried on any further. It is said that this mine is likely to be purchased by a Sydney company, to whom it is at present under offer. The quantity of quartz crushed last year was 97 tons, which yielded 198oz. of gold.

KARANGAHAKE DISTRICT.

The only mines in which work was being carried on at the time of my visit were the Mammoth, Woodstock, and Kenilworth. The operations in the other mines were suspended for a time.

Mammoth Mine.—This is owned by an English syndicate, who sent out a gentleman from England—Mr. Argill—to carry on prospecting operations to test the mine, previous to erecting machinery. The ground belonging to this syndicate is situated on the face of the range, on the westward side of the Woodstock Mine, and prospecting operations were being carried on at the time of my visit. This is the same ground where a rush took place in 1875. One of the old adit-levels was cleaned out and retimbered, and was being extended. Two quartz lodes were cut through, containing a little gold and silver, but they have a very broken appearance, and indicate that the whole face of the range here is only a portion of a large slip which has at one time come from the Karangahake Range. The character of the lodes and surrounding country rock in this adit-level gives one the impression that a permanent lode will not be found here. This syndicate have adopted a wise course, to prospect the ground first before going to any expense for machinery and plant. Recently I have heard that they have suspended operations.

Woodstock Mine.—This mine is let to a party of tributers, who are working on the lode, which is 6ft. in thickness. Stopping has been carried on from the adit-level to a height of 90ft., and the lode stoped out for a length of 25ft. During last year 312 tons of quartz have been crushed, which yielded 532oz. of gold, one parcel of 54 tons yielding 148oz. There is a large body of stone in this mine which contains sulphide of silver in combination with gold, but no process has yet been adopted here for the proper treatment of this class of ore.

Kenilworth Mine.—A few miners have been employed in this mine during the last year, but the quality of the ore is such that it cannot be successfully treated at any of the present crushing-plant in the colony. The lode in this mine is 3ft. in thickness, and contains chiefly silver ore. Two parcels of ore were sold at the mine, namely, 25 tons at £23 per ton, and 5 tons at £16 per ton, which were forwarded to Europe for treatment; 11½ tons were sold to Mr. W. Littlejohn, which he intends to treat with chemicals at the Ivanhoe Battery.

Several other mines have had a few men employed in them, but the work done is chiefly of a prospective character. There has been 70 tons of quartz crushed from the Monastery Mine, which yielded 160oz. bullion; 40 tons from the Diamond Mine, which yielded 139oz.; and 20 tons of ore from the Crown Mine, have been forwarded to Europe for treatment, but the returns have not yet come to hand. Railey's crushing-battery, from which so much was expected, and to which a tramway was constructed to connect it with the mines on the field, has turned out a failure; the whole plant was recently sold, being purchased by the mortgagees for £70. The tramway, when completed, was never used for the conveyance of quartz, as the battery since then has been standing idle. There have been about forty men employed in this district during the year.

WAIATEKAURI AND OWHAROA DISTRICTS.

A few claims are still working in these districts, but there is nothing like the mining population that was employed here in former years. At Owharoa the principal work done has been in the Smile of Fortune and Me and Rowe Mines. From the former mine, 200 tons of quartz and mullock have been crushed, which yielded 340oz. of gold. The lode from which this was taken is about 6ft. in width.