

value of £246 10s. 10d. was obtained. The manager is of opinion that the run of gold will be picked up further to the southward than where he has yet driven on the reefs at the intermediate and low levels.

Great Mercury Mine (Great Mercury Gold-mining Company, No Liability, owners).—Thirty men were employed. A large amount of work has been done during the year; new low-level cross-cuts were driven to cut both the Try Fluke and the Red Mercury reefs, a connection was made from the low level on the Try Fluke reef to the workings above, and it is expected that the block of ground opened will prove payable. The low-level cross-cut to the Red Mercury reef is not completed, and work has been carried on through the Red Mercury workings and levels. The driving of cross-cuts amounted to 820ft., through hard rock, and on reefs to 350ft., whilst a winze was sunk 100ft. on main reef, and a total of 755 fathoms of reef was stoped out. The quantity of quartz crushed was 1,894 tons, from which 1,084oz. 14dwt. of gold, valued at £2,407 15s. 7d., was obtained from the plates, and 985 tons of tailings treated by the cyanide process gave 345oz. 18dwt., valued at £738 4s. 4d.

The cyanide plant works well, and a new pump-shaft has been sunk, and a tail-race, 180ft., driven for the purpose of supplying the battery and engine-boiler with water from the creek. A ground tramway, 16 chains in length, has been made from the battery to a new hopper, which is connected by a wire tramway with No. 2 level. Another ground tramway, self-acting, has been laid from the entrance of the cross-cut in the main reef to connect with the line to the battery.

Kuaotunu Mine.—This mine was worked for a short time by the Kuaotunu Company, who crushed 157 tons of quartz for 73oz. 10dwt. of gold. An average of two men was employed. The mine has lately been purchased by the Try Fluke Company, and is worked from the levels of the Try Fluke Mine.

Just in Time (Just in Time Gold-mining Company, owners).—A party of tributers, who employ three men, has the mine on tribute. 147 tons of quartz were crushed for 107oz. 19dwt. of gold.

Irene (John Abbott, owner).—Richards and party have taken the mine on tribute. Two men are employed; and 14 tons of quartz yielded 19oz. 4dwt. of gold. A new cross-cut is being driven from the east side of the spur, so that the quartz can be delivered at the battery without being carted. 51 tons of tailings yielded 21oz. 7dwt. of gold.

Otama Mine (Otama Gold-mining Company, owners).—A party of three tributers has been working the mine. 2 tons and 40lb. of quartz and specimens were crushed for 52oz. 15dwt. of gold.

Waitaia Mine, situated on Comer's and McPherson's land (Waitaia Gold-mining Company, owners).—This mine was idle until the 22nd September, when it was let to a party of tributers. They drove a cross-cut to strike the reef 74ft. below the old workings, and stoped out a block about 60ft. in width for that depth. The roof is about 6in. in thickness. Sixty-three tons were crushed for 181oz. 2dwt. of gold. An average for the year of four men was employed.

Aorere, Comer's land (Loram and party, owners).—A considerable amount of work has been done in this mine. 100ft. has been driven on the reef, and a block stoped out. 113 tons of quartz were crushed for a yield of 96oz. 15dwt. of gold. Two men were employed.

Black Jack Mine (Black and party, owners).—Two men have been employed. The quartz worked on has been chiefly from a drive of 80ft. on the reef, which is from 2ft to 6ft. in thickness. 102 tons were treated for 97oz. 15dwt. of gold; value, £1 3s. per ounce.

Several claims have been occasionally worked by small parties, about nine men being employed. The returns are: Lucky Hit, 21 tons, for 15oz. 10dwt.; Loyalty, 7 tons, 8oz. 5dwt.; Invicta, 19 tons, 22oz. 11dwt.; Perseverance, 31 tons, 41oz. 11dwt.; Victoria, 30 tons, 8oz.; and sundry prospecting returns, 10 tons, for 12oz. 17dwt.

The total returns for the Tokatea, Kapanga, and Kauri Block show an increase of 366oz. 7dwt. compared with the return for 1893, while the mines at Tiki and to the eastward of Tokatea Range show a decrease of 2,025oz. 13dwt., chiefly owing to the Owera Mine being shut down.

The total returns from Kuaotunu show a decrease of 1,462oz. 13dwt. There has been a general falling-off in most of the mines worked, with the exception of the Try Fluke, which has an increase of 2,379oz. 16dwt.

The yield from the Try Fluke may be expected to be kept up, as five new stamps are added to the mill, making sixteen stamps in all, and the company, in acquiring more ground that has been opened up, will have additional opportunities of keeping the stamps going on profitable quartz. The stock of old tailings is, however, now almost exhausted, and the bulk of future returns must come from the quartz as taken from the mine.

The *Great Mercury Company* has got into financial difficulties. All the present shares are fully paid up, and no funds are available to develop the mine. The work will probably be stopped for a time, until the company is reformed and fresh capital introduced.

The *Red Mercury Mine* does not promise to keep up, in the immediate future, returns equal to those of last year.

The *Kapai Vermont Company*, however, has a very good prospect ahead, as the quartz in the paddock should prove payable, the most of it having shown gold freely where broken out of the reef.

The Otis ore-crusher and cyanide plant will both be ready shortly, to be used in the reduction of quartz and extraction of gold.

THAMES COUNTY.

TAPU CREEK DISTRICT.

Sheridan's Mine (Daniel Sheridan, owner).—This mine is continuously worked. The output of quartz was limited, being only 13 tons for a yield of 33oz. of gold. A considerable amount of work was done on the three leaders—upwards of 100ft. of driving, and a rise on No. 1 leader 80ft. Four men were employed.