

MANGANESE.

Manganese is worked on Waiheke and Kawau Islands, and also at Otonga, Mangapai, and Parua Bay, in the Whangarei district. Deposits of manganese have also been discovered in Helena Bay district.

The quantity shipped for the year was as follows:—From Waiheke—Colonial Manganese Company, 86 tons; J. Chambers and Son (from Thompson's mine), 200 tons; J. Thompson (from Thompson's mine), 50 tons. From Kawau—J. Chambers and Son, 92 tons. From Parua Bay—H. R. Cooke, 136 tons. Total, 564 tons.

GREAT BARRIER.

Union Jack Mine (Sanderson and party, owners).—A considerable amount of work has been done, and quartz taken from the surface-cuttings. In the low level the reef has been driven on for 50ft., but it is very much disturbed, and evidently poorer than at the surface-cutting. The party were engaged during my visit, on 2nd January, in driving a level, in conjunction with the Silver Queen owners, on the boundary of the two claims. A leader about 7in. in thickness was cut, showing silver in the stone, but it did not appear to be sufficiently rich to prove payable. Two men were employed. Two tons treated at the Thames School of Mines yielded 224oz. silver, and 2 tons 17cwt. treated at Fraser's Stanley Works, Auckland, yielded 491oz. 3dwt. silver.

No other work was being carried on at the time of my visit. Nothing payable has been discovered, although a good deal of surface-trenching, cutting, and driving had previously been done on the several claims.

PUHIPUHI DISTRICT.

No work has been done in mining for silver during the year. Negotiations for the introduction of English capital proved unsuccessful, and the local people are not inclined to undertake further expenditure at present.

Prospecting for cinnabar was, however, carried on during the year. Messrs. E. T. Firth and party commenced operations in the month of August, 1893, having previously arranged with the former prospectors to take over their interest in the prospecting area. (The work done by Firth and party is described in my report on cinnabar prospecting at Puhipuhi on 6th March last.)

The Puhipuhi Forest was deserted during my visit, on the 24th February last, with the exception of the cinnabar prospectors and the licensee of the Comstock Hotel, which had been burnt to the ground a few days previously. There was also a party of sawyers cutting totara for railway-sleepers in the burnt-kauri bush near Wairiki. There were no gumdiggers to be seen, the forest being closed to them until the 1st May.

Very little, if any, prospecting for antimony, cinnabar, or gold has been carried on in other parts of the district, although occasionally small samples of quartz are sent to me, which, when assayed, are of no value.

Coal-leases at Kawakawa, Ngunguru, and Hikurangi have been applied for at the Warden's Office, Whangarei.

Manganese.

Manganese mining still attracts attention throughout the district, and a considerable quantity is shipped to England.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE WILSON, Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

No. 4.

Mr. Warden ALLEN to the UNDER-SECRETARY OF MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Blenheim, 19th April, 1894.

I have the honour to forward you my usual report for the Marlborough District for the year ended 31st March, 1894.

This can be summed up in one short general report of the whole district, for, unfortunately, there is nothing particular to mention concerning any of the subdivisions of the goldfield under my charge. The number of miners at work upon the Marlborough goldfields is about the same as last year. Alluvial miners are making a living, or no doubt they would have left the district to try other fields. A sluicing company has started work at Deep Creek, but the work is not sufficiently advanced to show whether it will be a success or not. The King Solomon Company, on Cullen's freehold land, has found payable gold, and no doubt the greater part of Cullen's flat will eventually be worked.

A Wellington company has applied for 30 acres of land as a quartz claim above Deep Creek, but nothing has yet been done to require special mention. The manager is very sanguine of success, and he declares the reef found to be equal to any he has seen in this colony.

In concluding my brief report there is not a richer mineral district in New Zealand than may be found in some portions of Marlborough. There are rich deposits of alluvial gold yet to be found, requiring in every case proper appliances, and in many cases deep sinking, and we have many miles of reefing country practically unworked. In this and in other districts our small farmers are desirous of availing themselves of the advantages offered to them under the system of perpetual leases, and are seeking to extend their holdings. In several cases in this district their applications, if granted, will seriously encroach upon known auriferous country, and this is certain to lead to complications in the future.

I can only repeat suggestions formerly made: that certain blocks of land on the goldfields known to be auriferous should be set apart to be exclusively dealt with under the provisions of the Mining Act and regulations, and the Act and regulations amended in the direction of granting better tenure to applicants for occupation licenses.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Mines, Wellington.

J. ALLEN, Warden.