

Darwin Mine (Area, 8 acres).—This mine is situated at Punga Flat. There are not less than nine reefs and leaders in the ground, varying from a few inches to 2 ft. in width. The claim has been worked by different parties during the past twenty-eight years, and, as it lies at an altitude of 1,500 ft., it is highly probable that gold will be traced to greater depths in low levels. Twenty loads (30 tons) of quartz were crushed, for 56 oz. 10 dwt. of gold; value, £158 17s. Five men were employed.

Prospecting operations have also been carried on in the Alburnia East, Caspian, City of London, Just-in-Time, and European Claims.

Grahamstown District.

Victoria Mine (Area, 41 acres 3 roods 10 perches).—The chief workings during the year were conducted from the shaft formerly known as the Prince Imperial. The reef averages 1 ft. in thickness, and yields some rich pockets of picked stone; 2,089 tons of quartz was crushed, for 2,174 oz. 3 dwt. of gold, valued at £6,149 17s. 3d.; tailings sold valued at £18 19s. 6d.; and for tributers 20 tons for 3 oz. 15 dwt., value £10 4s. 3d: total, £6,179 1s. The shaft is furnished with safety-cages, and the winding machinery is driven by a semi-portable engine, Robey make, 18-horse power. Forty-two men were employed.

Cardigan Mine (Area, 64 acres 2 roods).—Prospecting work was carried on from the Saxon shaft, and a parcel of 16 tons 10 cwt. of quartz yielded 3 oz. 5 dwt. The company is now sinking a shaft opposite the *Thames Star* office. Six men were employed.

Drainage.

Drainage of the deep levels is carried on by the Thames Drainage Board, the Big Pump shaft being used. The working manager reports that the consumption of coal for the year ending 31st December last was 2,459 tons. The following extracts from the annual statement of accounts show the financial position of the Board, and also the contributions from the different companies assessed:—

Receipts.				£	s.	d.
To cash balance as per last balance-sheet				192	14	3
Arrears.	Assessment.	Rebate.	Cash received.			
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			
May Queen Gold-mining Company	1,620 0 0	202 10 0	1,417 10 0			
Waiotahi	645 0 0	80 12 0	564 8 0			
Moanataiari	354 8 0	44 6 0	310 2 0			
Victoria	349 13 0	43 13 0	306 0 0			
Cambria	302 8 0	37 16 0	264 12 0			
Hazelbank	233 2 0	29 2 8	203 19 4			
Cardigan	180 0 0	22 10 0	157 10 0			
Kuranui-Caledonian	142 11 0	17 16 4	124 14 8			
Kuranui	90 0 0	11 5 0	78 15 0			
Thames-Hauraki	60 0 0	7 10 0	52 10 0			
Kuranui No. 2	52 0 0	6 10 0	45 10 0			
	4,029 2 0	503 11 0	3,525 11 0			
Queen of Beauty Claim	360 0 0	60 0 0	125 0 0			
Thames Borough Council	20 0 0	120 0 0	130 0 0			
Thames County Council	40 0 0	240 0 0	260 0 0			
	420 0 0	4,449 2 0	798 11 0	4,040 11 0		
Coal supplied companies				102	13	7
				£4,335 18 10		

Expenditure.				£	s.	d.
Painting and renovating building				46	13	9
Coal				1,640	12	11
Wages				1,123	0	8
Foundry-work and ironmongery				261	14	4
Cartage				220	16	1
Water-supply, timber, and gas				125	10	0
Board fees and travelling-expenses				193	4	0
Salaries, insurance, advertising, &c.				136	15	10
Miscellaneous				38	9	6
Balance				549	1	9
				£4,335 18 10		

At the meeting Mr. Radford asked how the cost of coal compared with previous years. The chairman said the matter had been gone into from time to time, and it had been found that the figures came out in favour of New Zealand coal. As a matter of fact, only local coal had been used for the past two years, which in itself was sufficient proof.

A test was made recently of coal from Westport, Hikurangi, and Ngunguru, with the following result: Westport, 6 tons per day of 24 hours, at 19s., £5 14s.; Hikurangi, 7½ tons per day of 24 hours, at 11s. 9d., £4 8s. 1d.; Ngunguru, 6½ tons per day of 24 hours, at 12s. 5d., £4 0s. 9d. By this you will perceive that Ngunguru is the cheapest coal for our purposes, and, in addition, it is also the easiest on the fire-bars.

Waiotahi District.

Waiotahi Mine (Area, 22 acres 3 roods 30 perches).—This mine still continues to be a dividend-paying one. The nature of the work carried on is of the same character and in like manner as has