

Golden Pah shafts. A chamber was opened out at this depth, and about 1,800 ft. of driving and cross-cutting was done, and several bars of very hard country were passed through. Five different faces were driven from this level, two being on the line of reefs, which have not so far proved payable. The reef runs north-west and south-east, and dips north-east at an angle of 45°. Its width averages 3 ft., and the reef appears to be improving in quality, and is more defined where a rise was put up. Eleven men were employed—six underground and five on the surface, including three engine-drivers.

Hauraki North Mine.—There has been very little work done in developing this property during the year.

Trig Hill Mine.—This mine has been worked by a small party of tributers, who crushed a parcel of 4 tons of ore, for a yield of 8 oz. 14 dwt. of gold. Two men were employed.

Wynyardton.—This mine has been worked by tributers, who have operated on the surface and shallow levels, and have succeeded in obtaining 31 tons of quartz, which gave a return of 52 oz. 11 dwt. of gold; value, £153 5s. 4d.

Preece's Point District.

Preece's Point Mine.—Operations in this mine were of a limited character in the early part of the year, and the mine was shut down. It is understood that efforts are being made to resuscitate working of the mine by raising fresh capital.

Golden Shore.—A considerable amount of work was done in sinking the shaft to a depth of 137 ft. A small crushing, taken from the reef, did not, however, prove payable, and work has been suspended for a time.

Karaka Block District.

The discovery of gold that was made last year in one of the claims taken up on this ground, and from which good returns of gold were anticipated, has proved disappointing. 32 tons of quartz crushed during the year yielded 11 oz. 15 dwt. of gold, of the value of £33 18s. 9d.

Pukemaukuku Block.

Aitken's Freehold.—Prospecting has been regularly carried on on this land, but no returns of gold have been reported.

Empress Mine.—Some work has also been done on this mine, and a little prospecting on other portions of the block.

Tiki District.

Coromandel Freehold.—A considerable amount of prospecting- and development-work has been carried on in various sections of this company's property, and several reefs have been opened up and driven on in the different levels. The Blackmore, Home Rule, Union, and Little Nell reefs have all proved gold-bearing, and vary from 1 ft. to 3 ft. in width. A small parcel of quartz, about 5 tons, was crushed for a yield of 1 oz. 15 dwt., valued at £5 5s. An average number of eight men were employed.

The following mines also crushed as follows: Matawai Claim—3 tons quartz for 2 oz. 18 dwt., valued at £8 14s.; two men employed. Pohutu—50 tons 13 cwt. quartz, for 30 oz. 19 dwt., valued at £92 17s.; six men employed. The Golden Butterfly—15 cwt. quartz, for 5 oz. 12 dwt., valued at £16 16s.; two men employed.

A considerable amount of prospecting has been done throughout the district, but no find of any importance has been noted.

Matawai, or Castle Rock, District.

Progress Castle Rock Mine (Area, 60 acres; owners, Progress Castle Company; mine-manager, W. G. Martin).—This mine is situated on the spur along which the road runs, leading from the Matawai to Castle Rock. The nature of the development works carried on during the year was driving a cross-cut to intersect the No. 1 reef, and driving 112 ft. on the reef. Stopping is being carried on from a rise above No. 3 level. The reef at this point is about 8 in. in width, in which colours of gold are occasionally seen. It was near this place some picked stone was obtained about eighteen months ago. In the No. 4, which is about 70 ft. below the No. 3 level, the main lode has been intersected, and has been driven on 120 ft. in a south-westerly direction. The reef in the face is about 3 ft. in width, and is a well-defined body of highly mineralised quartz. Several other reefs of a promising character have been discovered on the property, but no work of any importance has, so far, been done on them. Five men are employed.

Manaiia District.

Although some work has been carried on here in various claims, no crushings have been reported.

Whangapoua District (Opitonui).

Kauri Freehold Gold Estates Company.—This company has carried on vigorous operations both in mine-development and in the erection of the battery and construction of tramways, &c. The mines are now well opened, and large quantities of quartz available for working out, a considerable quantity being already stacked at the surface. The battery, which will be one of the most complete of its kind, will shortly be ready; an unavoidable delay in its completion was due to the non-arrival of various portions of the plant from England. There is every indication that this company's mill, when at work, will largely contribute to next year's gold return. A large staff of men have found employment on the works connected with these mines, the average number being about a hundred and eighty, who are engaged in all kinds of work. The company's superintendent, Mr. Alexander Montgomery, has furnished me with the following particulars of the work carried out by the company during the year:—