

Hauraki Gem: Some nice specimens have lately been found in this mine by the tributers engaged in working it.

*Kennedy Bay.*

Very little is being done in this part of the district. The Bay View Special Claim is let on tribute, as also the Flossie. The Rose is turning out some nice specimens at present, and its prospects are good.

*Pukemaukuku Block.*

A good deal of prospecting has been done in this block during the year, but so far nothing of value has been discovered.

*Tiki.*

The Pukewhau, Progress Castle Rock, Royal Mint, and Pohutu are about the only claims at work in this part. The Progress Castle Rock Company obtained some specimens lately from its claim. I think this mine will yet occupy a more prominent place.

Several extended quartz claims have been taken up on ground which formerly was held as special claims. This indicates a new era from what has existed since the boom, when the cry was that 100 acres was too small. With small areas there is a better chance of the area being thoroughly prospected than with larger claims.

*Kuaotunu.*

This part of the district has been very quiet for months. Just lately the Kapai-Vermont and Great Mercury Claims have changed hands. They are good mines, but have been mismanaged. I trust the new owners will enter on active operations, and hope shortly to see these mines being well worked.

The Mariposa is steadily at work, also the Irene (on tribute) and the Waitaia, besides some small claims.

*Mercury Bay and Mahakirau.*

There was a small rush here towards the end of last year, and several special claims were pegged out.

The Colorado has changed hands, and the new proprietors are bent on giving it a thorough test.

Two 100-acre prospecting licenses have lately been granted at Guntown, and some more applied for. It is probable that a battery will soon be erected near Mercury Bay, with money voted for that purpose last session.

*Opitonui.*

This freehold property, owned by the Kauri Freehold Gold Estates (Limited), has been most energetically worked during the year, and in the course of a month or so it is contemplated that the battery, consisting of forty stamps, cyanide plant, &c., will be in permanent working-order. There is an immense quantity of dirt ready and available for crushing. Quite a large township is forming here, and it promises to become a very important portion of this district. This company has expended £70,000 on its property, and is a very large employer of labour. It is to be hoped it will meet with the success it so richly deserves by adding considerably to our monthly gold returns.

Great efforts are being made to get a battery at Coromandel for the purpose of testing quartz, and thus save the expense of sending away parcels of ore to Thames and Auckland. The establishment of a battery here will prove of great benefit to this part of the district.

The monthly return of gold for Coromandel shows that its prospects generally are thoroughly satisfactory.

*TE AROHA.*

There has been little progress in this district during the year to report. Several claims have been given up, while some have again been acquired by those who have studied the district for many years past, and are confident in its ultimate prosperity.

The successful treatment of the refractory ores has not yet been accomplished, and till that takes place no great advance can reasonably be expected. The Rev. J. Campbell, of the Montezuma Company, is still actively experimenting in the treatment of refractory ore by thermo-hyperphoric process. If he succeeds, which there is good reason to suppose he will, the future of the district will be assured.

In the Montezuma Company there has lately been a reconstruction, the colonial shareholders being so confident of the ultimate success of the treatment that they have taken over everything from the original company, and now intend vigorously conducting further experiments under Mr. Campbell's personal supervision.

The Aroha Mines, at Waiorongomai, have recently been transferred from the Exploration Company to Mr. E. H. Hardy, who intends carrying on operations immediately. The old battery has been thoroughly repaired; ten head of stampers, a stone-breaker, and one of the latest concentrators are now in position. The water-race has been put in good repair, and a right to use the county tramway acquired. A staff of men are engaged obtaining ore from the old Premier workings, so that a trial crushing will be made at no distant date. Mr. Hardy has agreed to allow prospectors and others the use of his battery for trial crushings at any time; this, of course, will mean a good thing for the district, since ore may now be treated almost on the spot, whereas formerly it had to be sent to the Thames, thus entailing a considerable expense in the way of carriage.

Prospecting has been carried on on the Loyalty Palace Special Claim at Waiorongomai. The mine is now being let on tribute. A trial crushing of 28 tons gave a return of £118, the gold being worth £3 6s. per ounce.