

*Victoria Mine.*—This company has had partial protection to work with a limited number of men, and the work done has been chiefly accomplished by tributers, who have been working on small leaders varying from 2 in. to 12 in. in thickness, and had 261 tons of quartz treated for 127 oz. 13 dwt., valued at £346 5s. The company have now decided to amalgamate with the Thames Foreshore Claim, with a view to putting down a bore in the latter claim outside of what is known as the "Seaward Slide," to ascertain the class of country, and should it prove favourable a scheme will be devised as to the best method of testing the various well-known reefs at a depth—viz., Shotover, Kuranui, Caledonian, Prince Imperial, &c.

*May Queen-Hauraki (Limited).*—The Cardigan Special Claim having been acquired by the company during the past year, the property now comprises an area of 231 acres 1 rood, of which 156 acres 3 roods are situated within the Thames drainage area. The Thames-Hauraki Company began pumping operations in January, and in February a start was made to sink winzes in the Saxon section, at No. 6 level, on No. 1 lode and new lode. In March the sinking of the main shaft in the May Queen section was resumed, and continued until a depth of 709 ft. was reached. At this point the new pump ceased to drain the shaft, and in consequence sinking had to be suspended. The sinking was carried out by contract, and, notwithstanding that a substantial bonus was given for every foot over 24 ft. per lunar month, the greatest depth attained in one month was 40 ft., and the average all through was only 31·5 ft. In six months a depth of 190 ft. was sunk, and a large chamber excavated at No. 7 level. Rock-drills driven by compressed air were used in the sinking of the shaft. The shaft passed through alternate bands of ash-rock and andesite lava, both exceedingly close-grained and tough, and, being without heads or joints of any kind, formed shooting ground of the worst description for making rapid progress. There is an old drive from the Queen of Beauty No. 10 level to within 240 ft. of the May Queen shaft, but so dense is the country in that short interval that there is no natural soakage towards the new pump, the pores and interstices in the rock having become filled up with fine silt and sediment. At the present time the bottom of the new pump-shaft is 292 ft. below the May Queen water-level, which further illustrates the impervious character of the rocks dividing the two shafts. From No. 6 level to the surface the size of the shaft is 12 ft. by 4 ft. 6 in., but below No. 6 level it was carried down an average size of 15 ft. by 5 ft., the ladder-way end being increased in size to 6 ft. by 6 ft. to give room for the erection of Cameron pumps to raise the water to No. 6 level (the old pump drainage-level) should the contingency arise. Last December the shaft gradually filled up, and in order to prevent the flooding of No. 7 level one of the 9 in. Cameron pumps was erected, and has been at work ever since. For the first six weeks the water to be lifted did not amount to more than 1,000 gallons per hour, but when the risings and workings on No. 4 and north-west lodes from No. 7 level became connected with No. 6 level the whole of the water flowing along No. 6 level found its way down to No. 7, and at the present time the pump is worked two hours every shift, Sundays included, lifting an aggregate of about 78,000 gallons a day, at a cost of nearly £30 per month for coal and attendance. It is worked by compressed air.

The work accomplished in the different sections of the mine during the year ended the 31st March may be summarised as follows:—

*May Queen section:* Sinking main shaft, 190 ft.; enlarging chamber at No. 6 level; constructing crosscut to No. 4 and north-west lodes, 366 ft.; driving on No. 4 lode—going east 350 ft., and going west 110 ft.; driving on north-west lode, 150 ft.; rising on north-west lode near junction, 50 ft.; and sinking winzes from No. 6 level, 120 ft. A block of ore 460 ft. long and 110 ft. high has been opened on No. 4 lode, and from the stopes 940 tons of payable ore has been won. Total driving, 976 ft.; winzes, 120 ft.; rises, 120 ft.; sinking main shaft, 190 ft.

*Saxon section:* A shaft 94 ft., and two winzes on No. 1 lode respectively 65 ft. and 45 ft. deep, and one on new lode 25 ft. deep have been sunk. No. 2 shaft was sunk from a chamber on No. 1 Saxon lode. A rise was constructed above the chamber to hold the head-gear and pulleys, and a crosscut and chamber to hold the winding-engine, which has a pair of high-pressure 6 in. cylinders with 10 in. stroke. The drums are 26 in. in diameter. The engine is actuated by compressed air supplied from the large air-compressor at the May Queen shaft. A 4 in. air-main is carried down the May Queen shaft to No. 6 level, and thence along the drainage crosscut to an air-receiver at No. 2 shaft. The winding-engine was constructed by Messrs. Price Brothers, Thames, and has worked without a hitch since the start. From the bottom of No. 2 shaft a drive has been driven on No. 1 Saxon lode—going west 127 ft., and going east 367 ft. A connection has also been effected with No. 2 winze. From this shaft a crosscut has also been carried southward 518 ft. to Cardigan No. 2 lode. Totals, sinking No. 2 shaft, 94 ft.; winzes, 145 ft.; rises, 60 ft.; driving, 1,012 ft.; engine-chamber, 44 ft. long; and one shaft-chamber 9 ft. long.

*Cardigan section:* In this section the drive on No. 2 lode has been carried along a further distance of 60 ft. At 40 ft. from the face No. 1 lode met No. 2 lode, and, as it contained a highly payable class of ore, a drive on it has been carried along 130 ft. in a north-easterly direction, with very satisfactory results. The total length of stopes on No. 2 Cardigan lode is 775 ft.—namely, 183 ft. east of No. 6 crosscut, and 552 ft. west.

Altogether some 2,000 ft. of driving and crosscutting and 880 ft. of sinking have been accomplished during the year. Mr. Park, as attorney of his company, has made a satisfactory arrangement with the attorneys of the Thames-Hauraki Goldfields (Limited) to mutually construct the drainage crosscut to connect the Queen of Beauty with the May Queen shaft at No. 10 level. As soon as the drainage-assessment difficulty is settled this work will be undertaken. The completion of this work will be of advantage to both companies; in the first place it will enable the May Queen to suspend pumping on their own account, and start the opening of their No. 8 level, and to the Thames-Hauraki it will bring the solution of the drainage difficulty nearer by causing the large body of water now being pumped by the May Queen to the old pump-drainage crosscut to