

Keep-it-Dark Quartz-mine.—(13/3/1900): The ore-body worked from Nos. 1 and 2 levels was intersected on No. 3 at 300 ft. from main shaft, and driven on 200 ft. The north face still continues to drive in 7 ft. of solid stone, and its vertical position is considerably in advance of No. 2 face, where the stone is pinched out. Thus, extending northwards, reef indications are favourable as deeper levels are attained. The necessary connection between Nos. 3 and 2 levels was raised 172 ft. on the solid stone underlie, whereby the direct-rise system was completed to the surface, giving facilities for filling in, ventilation, &c. Stone was chiefly mined from No. 2 stopes, but in view of dispensing with night-shift in the mine, and to raise sufficient stone for the battery in full work, stoping is commenced on No. 3 level. Timbering, ventilation, and filling are sufficient. Reports kept to date. Since the new ore-body in the mine was developed, the battery alterations completed, and the cyanide developments carried out to a successful issue, prosperity has characterized this company's operations. From prospects seen, this is likely to continue, if not to improve. Quartz crushed, 9,100 tons; gold yield, 2,495 oz. 7 dwt. 9 gr.; total by cyanide, 1,681 oz. 13 dwt. 6 gr. bullion; value, £5,461 8s. 7d.

Hercules Quartz-mine.—(13/11/99): For a considerable time past work in this mine has been of a very irregular character, with the result that the mine was ultimately shut down.

Keep-it-Dark No. 2.—(13/3/1900): This mine is shut down. The winding-ropes are taken off.

Sir Francis Drake Quartz-mine.—(16/3/1900): There was no work done in this mine during the last six months.

Big River Quartz-mine.—(16/3/1900): In this property the quartz blocks are small and irregular in their formation, but are of high value. During the year the quartz output was chiefly mined from a block located between Nos. 5 and 6 levels, having an average width of 5 ft., length of 35 ft., and stoped to a height of 90 ft. Since this ore-body was exhausted stone of a payable character has not been met with, and in consequence operations are chiefly confined to prospecting. Several crosscuttings and sinkings were carried out in different sections of the property, with unfavourable results. After crosscutting 262 ft. on No. 6 level a small block 18 ft. in length and 3 ft. 6 in. in width was intersected and developed. The works are in good order and condition. Timber carefully set; ventilation good; winding-ropes renewed; machinery and safety appliances in good repair. Reports to date.

St. George Quartz-mine.—Not visited during the year.

Last Chance Quartz-mine.—(16/3/1900): This party has ceased to work the quartz leaders in the sandstone formation, and operations are confined to the A1 section of the property. The country-rock is stratified-slate formation, with a thin auriferous layer of clay and quartz intervening, and after the slate is mined off, the quartz is filled into bags and sent to the battery. Favourable prospects were obtained from the upper-drive "dump," and provision is made to sluice away these headings when rain-water is available. As this party are practical miners, the property is carefully worked. The plant consists of a steam-driven five-stamp battery. 593 tons of quartz yielded 211 oz. 16 dwt. 15 gr. of gold.

New Inkerman Mines.—(5/3/1900): Locality, Merrijigs and Rainy Creek; B. Sutherland, mine-manager. Since the New Inkerman Mines Company (Limited) held possession of this extensive property systematic developments have been continuously pushed forward, in view of making Rainy Creek adit-level the centre of mining operations and the main traffic thoroughfare, through which all ore-bodies mined will be conveyed direct to the battery. Connection with Rainy Creek and New Inkerman shaft being successfully completed, it was afterwards determined to drive No. 5 south on defined line from main adit, with the object of intersecting No. 2 Supreme. The reef was struck at 989 ft., and driven on 387 ft. (east 182 ft., and west 205 ft.). Average driving per week, 66·95 ft., and width of lode, 8·5 ft. Also, a vertical shaft is raised 124 ft. from No. 5 south to connect with surface-tramway, in order to facilitate the working of the Golden Gully ore-bodies; for filling, ventilation, &c. In October last the work of renewing the thirty-stamp old battery was started, and fifteen head of stamps are now completed. Preparatory to crushing, the ore-bins were stacked with several hundred tons of stone from driving on reef. The average number of men employed during the eight months was—Wages-men, 42; contractors, 3. The material and plant are in good order. Ventilation good throughout the mines. Timber carefully set. Reports to date. During the four years that developments have been pushed forward on this property the company has expended £35,000 without any returns. The developments include—Driving, 12,000 ft.; sinking, 1,200 ft.; raising, 300 ft.

Cumberland Quartz-mine (William Annear, mine-manager).—(15/3/1900): Mining is confined to prospecting. Stoping was continued on No. 4 level, from which 200 tons of stone treated at the battery yielded very unsatisfactory results. Several broken undefined low-grade ore-bodies were cut, but were considered unprofitable. Timber is carefully set, and ventilation is good. Reports to date.

PAPAROA RANGES.

Cræsus (Paparoa) Quartz-mine (James Carroll, mine-manager).—(2/4/1900): The principal developments are driving No. 2 level southward on line of reef, and sinking a winze from same level to prove the country on deeper levels. The reef carries well-defined stone, 4 ft. in width, of fair value, and assumes a more permanent character as sinking proceeds. Stoping is continued on Nos. 1 and 2 levels, employing ten men. The ground is securely timbered, and ventilation is good. The mine-manager (who is newly appointed) was instructed to post his name at mine-mouth; also special rules under "The Mining Act, 1898."

Taffy Quartz-mine (Henry Evans, mine-manager).—(2/4/1900): The country-rock is quartz-slate formation intermixed with siliceous veins. Three men work the ground open-face, and the leaders are crushed by a five-stamp battery, working eight hours a day.