

A little prospecting-work has been done on the following mines: viz., the Gem, Myosotis, and Golden Hill Claims, from which fair dish-prospects have been obtained, but no work of a permanent nature has been undertaken up to the present.

Golden Belt Mine, Neavesville.—In the early part of the year work was confined to prospecting, sampling, and assaying the various reefs which were opened up, to a large extent, by companies and other owners previous to the present holders, with a view of ascertaining the general value of the ore before erecting an up-to-date plant and adopting a scheme for the development of the property. The operations have been carried out under the supervision of Mr. H. H. Adams, and the results obtained are, I am informed, considered satisfactory. The company having decided to erect a thirty-stamp battery, the timber necessary for the building, &c., has been cut by hand-sawyers on the ground. In the mine a considerable amount of preliminary work has been done in repairing and cleaning out old levels, and since this was accomplished the low level has been extended to a point where a connection will be made with the upper levels, and the quartz broken out at those levels will be conveyed down through passes, &c., to the low level, and from thence by an aerial tramway to the battery. An average of six men has been employed in the mine.

Eliza Claim, Katikati.—A local syndicate is again trying this piece of ground. Two men have been employed on it for a time, and a test ton of quartz has been sent to the Thames School of Mines for treatment, but the result has not yet been made known.

Te Puke Reefs, Te Puke.—Prospecting operations in this mine have been carried on with three men during the year; but a company has now been formed, and work is to be resumed at once, with a view of proving the value of the property by opening out a low level and otherwise prospecting the property before commencing to erect a crushing plant.

Waihi Beach Claims, near Waihi.—This ground was under option for some considerable time, and a few men were occasionally employed; but the work was simply a little scratching here and there, and of little or no value. The company are advised that to prove the value of the property it will be necessary to sink a shaft some distance back from the beach, on which a pumping-engine could be put on should the water be troublesome, but there is nothing to indicate that much water will be met with. This matter is under consideration.

THAMES DISTRICT.

Miner's Right Claim, Puriri.—Operations in this mine have been steadily carried on during the year. The work has been chiefly confined to driving and stoping on various small leaders near the surface, and from which 171 tons of ore was broken out and treated at the owner's small battery for a return of 95 oz. 9 dwt. of gold, valued at £266 9s. 6d. An average of five men was employed.

Puriri Gold Estates.—Only a very limited amount of work has been done on this property, as it was under protection the first half of the year. Since then four men were employed in prospecting on the different sections of the ground, but up to the present no important discovery has been reported.

Klondike.—In the beginning of the year this mine was taken over by an Auckland company, who proceeded to erect a five-stamper battery to test the property, and before doing this a sideling track over a mile long, and costing about £150, had to be formed to enable the machinery to be conveyed to the site for the mill. In the battery building provision has been made for ten stamps should future prospects warrant it. The five heads are now erected, and crushing operations will be commenced as soon as the mine and battery are connected by an aerial wire tramway which is under way. The motive power for the mill is water, and the water-race (which is completed) is 10 chains in length, and connected with the battery by 400 ft. of galvanised-steel pipes 8 in. in diameter. The vertical height of the water-race above the battery is 264 ft., which gives a pressure of 114 lb. to the square inch. The machinery is driven by a 3 ft. Pelton wheel, manufactured by A. and G. Price, Thames. Very little driving has been done in the mine during the year—about 30 ft. altogether. The formation which carries the gold consists of hard country-rock, with oxide-of-iron veins running through it, from which good dish-prospects can be obtained. Regarding the future working of the mine, driving will be carried along the auriferous formation, and sinking will be resorted to before trying to prove the mine by long crosscuts. An average of six men was employed.

Sheet Anchor, Omahu.—Operations in the mine during the year have been exclusively confined to prospecting. The low level was extended a considerable distance past the point where it was expected the reef would be intersected; but, it not being met with, this work was stopped and attention directed to driving on a reef formation which had been previously cut through in the level some distance back from the face. The reef averages 2 ft. in width, and has been driven on a distance of 200 ft., and a rise has also been put up on the reef 35 ft. to prove its value. Although carrying a little gold, it has not been proved to be good enough to treat in any large quantity. A prospecting crosscut was also put in from the surface at a point some distance westward of the main workings, where a large reef formation has been intersected. This carries a little gold, but requires further development to prove the value of the discovery. No quartz was crushed in any quantity. An average of four men was employed.

Fortuna, Hauraki.—Operations in this mine during the year have been principally carried on by tributers on the various leaders that traverse the property. At the end of the year the Hague Smith level was being cleaned out and retimbered by Mr. Rabe for the purpose of opening up new ground at this level. 55 tons of ore was broken out and treated by the owners for a return of 32 oz. 7 dwt. of gold, valued at £87 1s. 1d. An average of six men was employed.

Ethel Reefs.—This property was surrendered by the Ethel Reefs Company in the early part of the year, and since then a portion of the ground has again been taken up, but only a limited