

ANNEXURE B.

REPORTS OF WARDENS.

Mr. Warden DYER, Tauranga, to the UNDER-SECRETARY OF MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Tauranga, 31st January, 1914.

I have the honour to report that there has been very little mining activity in this district during the year ended 31st December, 1913. Some prospecting for gold has been carried on at the eastern extremity of the Bay of Plenty, between Cape Runaway and Port Awanui, but nothing of any importance has been discovered. Seven miners' rights have been issued to prospectors in that locality.

Nothing has been done at the Te Puke reefs, but five miners' rights have been issued to miners there.

I have, &c.,

J. W. DYER, Warden.

Mr. Warden PAGE, Whangarei, to the UNDER-SECRETARY OF MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Warden's Court, Whangarei, 6th April, 1914.

I have the honour to present my annual report on the Puhipuhi Mining District for the year ended the 31st December, 1913.

During the year in question some development-work has been carried out at Puhipuhi, and the extent of the cinnabar-deposits has been proved over an area of about 1,500 acres.

A six-retort furnace for treating and testing the cinnabar-ore has been completed by the Whangarei Cinnabar Company (Limited), and out of the first charge of ore, about 15 cwt., between 35 lb. and 40 lb. of metallic mercury was obtained. The ore treated had been exposed to the atmosphere for at least eighteen months, and was of much lower grade than that in sight in the drive at the present time.

Mitchell and party have continued prospecting with a view to further testing the value of the large ore-deposit on their claim. Mr. Robert M. Green, metallurgist, was engaged to examine and report on the cinnabar-deposits. Mr. Green has given a lengthy and interesting report under date the 8th November, 1913.

It is reported that towards the north-east of the cinnabar-deposits a good-looking gold-bearing reef has been discovered, and prospecting-work on this reef has been carried out, but nothing is known to me as to the value or extent of the reef.

The deposits of silver-ore in the same locality have received some attention during the year, and an attempt was being made in Australia to float a company for the purpose of erecting machinery to extract the silver from the ore. The holders of the claims, covering some 300 acres, have been granted six months' protection to enable them to obtain the necessary capital to profitably work the claims.

Coal-mining has been actively carried on at Hikurangi by the Northern and Hikurangi Coal Companies.

During the year ended the 31st December, 1913, there has been a considerable increase in the business in the Warden's Court for the district, fifty-five applications being received for mining privileges (as against fifteen applications in 1912), and licenses were granted covering an area of 1,517 acres. Applications covering 960 acres were adjourned, at the request of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Auckland, to enable surveys of the locality to be completed.

I have, &c.,

E. PAGE, Warden.

Mr. Warden BURGESS, Thames, to the UNDER-SECRETARY OF MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Thames, 20th April, 1914.

I beg to forward herewith my report on the Hauraki Mining District for period ended 31st December, 1913.

On the whole, the mining industry cannot be said to have progressed in this district. No fresh developments have taken place tending to its extension. The gold produced during the past twelve months has been obtained from mines in operation for some years. Except for the work carried on by the owners of these claims, mining has ceased—only temporarily I hope—to be prosecuted with any vigour throughout the district. Many of the smaller claims in which work of a prospecting nature has been carried on for some years have had to suspend operations and obtain protection from the Court, because it has been found impossible to induce the shareholders to continue their contributions. Calls made by many of the companies have resulted in large numbers of shares being forfeited. Some of these claims appeared to promise success if operations could have been continued, but unless public interest is soon revived in the gold-mining industry most of these claims will be abandoned by their owners.

Mining in this district began to show a decided decline soon after the falling-off in the Waihi Company's returns. The strike that occurred not long afterwards had a very depressing influence,