

Northcote Claim, Waikoromiko (J. W. Boswell and A. R. Shutes, Owners).—Operations were confined to the Cuirassier reef, on which 115 ft. of driving was carried out. Stoping of this vein above the No. 1 intermediate level resulted in about 1 cwt. of picked stone being obtained, which on treatment yielded 32 oz 6 dwt. of gold, valued at £180 12s. 4d. The total production since the beginning of operations is 96 oz. 18 dwt. of gold, valued at £537 16s. 4d.

Waikoromiko Sluicing Co., Kennedy's Bay.—Work has been confined chiefly to the completion of the main tail-race. During the process of working up the river old workings were met with, but these have now been passed. The tail-race has reached a position where virgin wash will be met with, and it is expected that production will commence shortly. On an average, eight men were employed. During the year 20 oz. 11 dwt. of gold, valued at £118 2s. 3d., was obtained. This is the total output since the commencement of operations.

Lone Hand Claim, Kennedy's Bay (W. J. Pearce, Owner).—The low level was advanced to 180 ft. from the portal. An intermediate tunnel was driven for 130 ft., and a rise was put up from the first-named level to connect with same. About 5½ tons of quartz was crushed for 16 oz. of gold, valued at £87 18s. 3d. The total production since the commencement of operations is 121 oz. 13 dwt. of gold, value £631 10s. 5d.

Hardy's Mines, Waiorongoma (M. V. Hardy, Owner).—Practically the only work done on this claim during the year was the opening of the No. 1 winze on the Colonist reef, from which 2 tons of picked stone was saved for future treatment. McLean's level was also retimbered for about 90 ft. to enable sampling to be carried out.

PROSPECTING.

The great bulk of the prospecting work, as during last year, was carried out under the Labour Department's prospecting-schemes at Thames and Coromandel. In the former locality an average of approximately a hundred men was employed, and in the latter about fifty men. The subsidized men at Thames won 719 oz. 15 dwt. of gold, valued at £3,713 11s. 3d., while those at Coromandel produced 336 oz. 14 dwt. of gold, worth £1,843 11s. 8d.

BORING (ALLUVIAL).

Kennedy's Bay, Coromandel.—Thirteen holes were put down on claims held by Messrs. Land and McLeod in this locality, the work being carried out by Austral Malay Tin, Ltd. The holes averaged 47 ft. in depth; 6 in. casing, with a 7¼ in. cutting shoe, was used in drilling.

PRODUCTION FROM OIL-WELLS.

Moturoa Oilfields, Ltd. (K. E. Pedersen, Manager).—No drilling was done by this company during the year, operations consisting mainly of repairs and maintenance in connection with the production of Nos. 1, 2, and 4 wells. Three men were employed. Nos. 1 and 4 wells, flowing under their own gas pressure, produced 7,925 and 43,267 imperial gallons respectively, while from No. 2 well 106,699 imperials gallons was obtained by bailing at intervals. The value of the oil produced was £2,960 9s. 1d.

N.Z. Oil Refineries, Ltd. (W. Fossey, Manager).—Two employees. This company has purchased the total output from the wells operated by Moturoa Oilfields, Ltd., since 19th October, 1931, the greater part being refined by the company and marketed in New Zealand. The residue oil amounts to 26 per cent. of the total. This could be cracked into petrol and kerosene, or stiller further, and its wax content, about 40 per cent., treated, but costs would be too high on account of the limited production. Recoveries from the 936,129 gallons of crude oil purchased consist of the following: Petrol, 204,617 gallons (20 per cent.); distillate, 51,428 gallons (6 per cent.); power kerosene, 178,265 gallons (16 per cent.); heavy kerosene, 81,941 gallons (12 per cent.); diesel oil, 43,075 gallons (14 per cent.); residue oil, 349,479 gallons (26 per cent.) Loss, 27,324 gallons (6 per cent.). The oil from Nos. 2 and 4 wells averages 22 per cent. of petrol and 10 per cent. of wax, and 17 per cent. of petrol and 15 per cent. of wax respectively. The Railway Department has used 42,568 gallons of heavy kerosene and 117,425 gallons of residue oil for fuel. The Prisons Department has purchased 13,039 gallons of power kerosene. There is no sale for the residue oil at the present time and stocks are accumulating in an unwelcome manner as a result.

ACCIDENTS.

Two fatalities occurred at mines in the district during the year. The first of these was on the 14th January, when William Godfrey Collins, aged 65, married, was run over by a train when endeavouring to catch a horse which was in his charge and which had strayed on to the Government railway-line from the Waikino battery yard. The victim of the second accident, which occurred on the 8th June, on the surface at the Martha Mine, was William Thomas Moyes, aged 51, married. It appears as if deceased was trying to sprag the front wheel of a truck which was being drawn along a tramway by a horse, and while doing so he fell across the track. The truck passed over his body, with the result stated. There was one fatal quarry accident. This happened on the 21st December, at the Matatoki Quarry, Thames County, the victim being Ivan Lendich, aged 35, single. The deceased was charging a hole with lithyte when the charge exploded prematurely. He was standing directly over the hole and apparently received the full force of the explosion in the face and body, and was blown over a bench on which he was working. Death must have been instantaneous, the body being brought to rest by a safety rope. A verdict of accidental death was returned in each of the above cases.

WEST COAST INSPECTION DISTRICT (G. W. LOWES and A. W. TURNER, Inspectors of Mines).

QUARTZ-MINING.

Marlborough County.

Smile of Fortune Mine, Wakamarina (Luigi Iada, Manager).—An average of five men was employed, and the ore stoped out from the adit level to the outcrop. A winze was sunk 50 ft. below the level on low-grade ore, and further prospecting of the surface outcrop is being carried out with the object of discovering a payable shoot of ore before driving a lower level, which is necessary before milling can be resumed. The proprietors of this claim erected an efficient ball mill, classifier, hammer rock-breaker, and an air-compressor to operate rock-drills (driven by a 40 h.p. diesel engine), and treated 1,003 tons of ore for a return of 92 oz. 2 dwt. 7 gr. of gold, valued at £642 9s.

Golden Bar Mine, Wakamarina.—This mine under the same ownership and management as the Smile of Fortune has been reopened at the south end with a view to driving on a 5 ft. lode, which the former owners did not exploit. If payable values are proved by the extension of the No. 2 level south, a treatment plant will be erected.

A considerable amount of prospecting has been carried out on the range situated between Cullen's Creek and the Waikakaho Creek. Numerous quartz lodes and leaders are known to exist in the schist country, which was the source of the alluvial gold won in both valleys. Values in the larger deposits so far tested have been below the paying-point, while the rich leaders are not continuous in either length or depth.

Buller County.

Britannia Mine.—W. McLellan, manager, and three men carried on prospecting operations until May. No consistent body of payable ore was discovered. In May the company closed down, and two months later went into liquidation. Forty-three tons of ore was crushed, yielding 31 oz. 10 dwt. 18 gr. of gold, valued at £118 2s. 11d.