

been exercised in properly securing or filling in the stopes, the extent of which, being closed, could not be ascertained: the consequence of this was, that the roof left gave way, which allowed the sea-silt to get vent into the old workings, causing a large subsidence of the ground near the shaft, burying the winding-engine, ropes, and other gear, and so endangering the shaft that all thoughts of further pumping from it had to be abandoned.

*Queen of Beauty Mine.*—The company holding the mine, finding that drainage operations could not be resumed from the Piako shaft, determined to erect pumping-machinery in their own shaft, which is sunk closer to the hill, and through solid rock. With a view to this, one compartment of their shaft has been stripped and enlarged down to the present water-level, and a 12-inch plunger is now being fixed. This pump is to be worked by a large turbine-wheel, driven by water supplied from water-race constructed by Government. A steam-engine is also to be attached in case of accidents to water-supply. The poppet-heads have been renewed, and a steam-capstan is to be erected for the purpose of raising and lowering heavy weights in connection with the pumps. It is expected that operations will be commenced about the end of May. In this mine the deepest payable quartz yet obtained on the field was got—at a depth of 560 feet below sea-level. Having also a good show of gold under foot, in restarting their works they have therefore every prospect of success. The drainage operations will also enable other portions of the district to be opened out and prospected, including the Crown Princess Gold-mining Company's property.

*Moanataiari District.—Moanataiari Mine.*—This is the largest and one of the most successfully-worked mines on the field. The main tunnel runs into the hills from the beach in a north-east direction for a distance of 1,300 feet. The principal works during the year have been driving two main cross-cuts from this tunnel in a southerly direction. The first of these has now been driven for a distance of 225 feet, in order to prospect the lower levels of the reefs which formerly gave handsome returns in the upper levels of the Nonpareil and Waitemata Mines; but a further distance of 1,000 feet has yet to be driven before cutting these reefs. The second cross-cut was driven from near the present end of the main tunnel for a distance of 450 feet, when a large reef, 20 feet in thickness, was tapped. Judging from the enormous body of water that flowed from this reef, a very large extent of back country must have been drained. This large reef is gold-bearing, but, so far as prospected, not sufficiently so to be payable. As it is supposed to be a continuation of the Caledonian reef, the expectations of good finds being yet obtained are likely to be realized when it is more opened out on. In driving these cross-cuts, rock-drills were used, driven by compressed air. A large amount of driving has also been done on the north side of the main tunnel, and a number of small veins cut, yielding good returns, the greatest quantity of gold obtained during the latter half of the year being from this section of the mine. As these veins are being traced downwards, they will in the lower levels be worked from the shaft which is sunk below the tunnel level. No advance has been made in further sinking this shaft, on account of the rise of the water. Another level is also being driven from the surface, near the Moanataiari Creek, on the Point Russell reef: this has now been extended 250 feet along the reef, cutting one or two runs of gold. During the year 3,145 square fathoms have been worked out on the various reefs and leaders, giving 10,926 tons of quartz, which, when crushed, yielded 14,315 oz. of gold. There has also been 1,230 feet of tunnelling or driving done in the same time, giving employment, on the average, to about 170 men.

*Reuben Parr Mine.*—This is a new claim, lately taken up on ground formerly held by the Middle Star and Twenty-third of June Companies. It is the intention of this company to carry in extensive tunnelling works, in order to cut the reefs at low levels which previously gave good returns when worked near the surface. Various schemes for this purpose are now under consideration.

*Alburnia Mine.*—The operations in this mine have been carried out very successfully during the year. A large deposit of gold has been found in the Sons of Freedom reef, between the Whau and lower levels. The block immediately under the Whau level has given splendid returns, enabling the company to pay £19,000 in dividends within the past five months. Another block, deeper than the above, has been opened, which, from appearances, will also give good dividends. As this reef for 200 feet over the low level is comparatively untried, and as it extends from 500 to 600 feet through the company's property, there is every prospect of future success. The low level has been extended 100 feet, and a considerable amount of driving and sinking work has been done in order to develop the mine. The upper levels are let to tributers, who seem to be satisfied with their success. The company have purchased and thoroughly renovated the Prince Alfred Battery, situated on the flat, near the beach, and have fitted it up with the best appliances for saving gold. The motive power being water, crushing can now be done cheaper, enabling a lower grade of quartz to be treated, that formerly would not pay.

*Whau.*—The ground held by this company is entirely surrounded by the Alburnia holding, and is worked from their levels. It was let to tributers, whose rights the company purchased after the Alburnia Company found good gold close to their boundary. They then sank a winze on the run of gold within their own ground. In the first 20 feet that this winze was sunk 20 loads of quartz were taken out, which on being crushed yielded 1,281 oz. of gold. The further sinking of this winze and other works are in progress to work the run of gold in this lode, which runs through their ground for a distance of 200 feet, while the shot of gold appears to dip into it.

*Punga Flat District.—New North Devon.*—This mine adjoins the Alburnia on its northern boundary and is worked (on tribute) from the Whau level, through the Whau and Alburnia Mines. The tributers have been very successful, the reef (known as the Sons of Freedom Reef) being from 4 to 6 feet thick, yielding from 3 to 4 oz. to the load. As the run of gold seems to extend downward, the future prospects of this company are very good.

*Bendigo United.*—This mine lies to the east of the New North Devon, and has been worked on tribute; but no energy was displayed in prospecting or developing the mine, on account of the directors being unable to collect the calls. The encouraging prospects in the neighbouring mines have now, however, induced the shareholders to pay these calls, and prospecting works have now been commenced.

*Columbia.*—This mine adjoins the New North Devon on its northern boundary, and has lately been taken up in consequence of the improved prospects in the Alburnia, Whau, and New North Devon