

New North Devon Mine.—Operations were confined to stoping out portions of the reef between the 160-foot and the Whau levels in the early part of the year. The quartz yielded favourable returns, but latterly it has become too poor to pay. Several of the upper blocks have been let to tributers, who are having only moderate returns.

Waiotahi District.—At the head of the creek the Bright Smile claim is still yielding rich returns. The Pinafore and West Coast Mines are also paying well. The Hopeful has been steadily worked, and fair returns obtained. The other claims are having only very moderate returns, which are not payable.

Tararu District has lately been almost deserted. A party of miners erected a small battery driven by water-power to test a large reef on the line of the Black Reef, but the returns have not yet been payable. A company has been formed to open up the Sunbeam Reef from the Tararu Battery Tunnel, and a commencement will soon be made to put the tunnel in repair.

Karaka Creek District.—The City of Manchester and the Adelaide Claims are still profitably wrought, gold in payable quantities has been found in a low level lately driven to the reef. Small parties of miners are earning good wages, working on leaders in several claims farther up the creek.

Te Papa Gully and Hape Creek District.—Star of Te Papa Mine has not yielded returns so good as was expected. The run of gold has not yet been traced to any great depth below the surface level, and none of the claims in the locality have got returns worthy of note. Hape Creek Mine was worked very successfully by tributers, and a company is now being formed to sink the shaft to a greater depth. Several claims have been taken up and wrought for a time, but the returns of gold have been very moderate.

Otunui District.—Two parties of miners have found patches of good specimens in a reef in this locality, and a number of claims have been marked out in consequence. There is every reason to believe that more gold-bearing reefs will yet be found in this district, the rock being of what is called a kindly nature for gold. Some time will elapse before this part of the field can be thoroughly tested, as there is not a practicable road yet made to it, and it is distant about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the nearest battery.

Tairua District.—The Decide Claim has yielded fair returns of gold from the surface part of the reef. The Gem and Wheel of Fortune Claims have also had encouraging returns from trial crushings, and are preparing to work their reefs in a systematic manner, and the New Guinea Claim is not paying.

OHINEMURI.

Karangahake District.—The Christmas-Box Claim was prospected for several months by two men, and fair prospects were found in a reef; but as there was great difficulty in getting quartz to a battery no trial crushing has yet been made. The Keep-it-Dark and Caledonia Claims were taken up on a large reef situated within a short distance of the top of the Karangahake Mountain. This reef is about 8 feet in thickness, and gold is freely seen in the stone taken from about 2 feet of the hanging-wall side of it. The most gold is seen in black streaks in the stone, and the appearance of the quartz generally is much like that in which gold is being found at Te Aroha. Several other claims have been marked out, and arrangements have been made with the owners of the old battery formerly owned by the Karangahake Gold-mining Company to have it put in repair. There is, therefore, every probability that this district, which was the scene of the first great rush in 1875 and afterwards abandoned, will yet come to the front.

Owharoa District.—Radical Extended Mine: This mine has been worked by tributers, and several rich yields of gold realized; the drives on low levels are still being pushed ahead, and there is every reason to believe that new runs of gold may be discovered.

Smile of Fortune Mine.—A party of tributers were very successful in finding a rich run of gold, and after their term expired the company worked the reef on their own account, and now employ about twenty men in working the mine and battery. The returns are still very satisfactory.

Lucky Hit Mine is situated to the north of the Smile of Fortune and Radical ground. Several payable returns from the upper levels encouraged the owners to put in a low-level tunnel, and that work is now progressing. In the Battalion, Old Nut, and Star of the South Claims, encouraging prospects are found. Several other parties are prospecting in the claims taken up, but no payable gold has yet been found.

WAITEKAURI DISTRICT.

Waitekauri Mine.—The tributers have been very successful during the year, and rich returns of gold have also been got by the company on their own account from the same reef as the tributers wrought on. The mine is again entirely let to parties on tribute, and there is every prospect of continued success.

Waitekauri No. 3 Mine.—This ground was taken up on the underlay of the reef worked by the tributers in the Waitekauri Mine. Several payable returns have been got, but the run of gold becomes poorer in following it downwards.

Waitekauri Extended Mine.—Payable returns have been got from a small reef in this ground; but as an expensive drive is necessary to open it, an amalgamation with the adjoining claims is talked of for the purpose of thoroughly testing the reefs at a greater depth.

Just in Time Mine.—A parcel of rich specimens was found at the outcrop of a large reef, and a drive was put in to test the reef deeper. The returns have not been, so far, satisfactory. They are now putting up a rise from this level to the surface.

Welcome.—Parties of tributers are occasionally getting small parcels of payable quartz; but very little prospecting is going on.

Diamond.—The returns from this claim were very good: 3 oz. per ton. There is every appearance of a continuation of payable yields coming from the reef.

A number of claims other than those mentioned have been taken up at Waitekauri, and in several a considerable amount of prospecting done, but so far no payable gold has been found, although loose gold and rich boulders of quartz on the surface would lead to the belief that other rich reefs may yet be discovered in an extensive area of country in this locality.