

WARDENS' AND WATER-RACE REPORTS.

AUCKLAND GOLD FIELDS.

No. 1.

Mr. Warden KENRICK to the UNDER-SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Coromandel, 29th April, 1884.

I have the honour to report that mining has been very dull in this portion of the Hauraki Gold-Mining District during the year ended the 31st March, 1884, a condition traceable to various causes. In many claims the gold appears to exist only in the surface levels: work at a lower depth has not proved remunerative, and prospecting has not been pushed deep enough to prove whether or not a lower payable strata exists. Another cause of depression arose through the great flood of July last, which completely stopped mining operations in most of the holdings for some months. During the last two months a decided change for the better has set in on one part of the field, viz., in the Tiki District. This is mainly owing to a claim called the Matawai, situated on a creek of that name. The owners of this claim, after years of profitless labour, uncovered a reef which has within the last six months yielded upwards of three hundred ounces of gold. A low-level has been driven for upwards of one hundred feet on a reef varying from 4ft. to 9ft. in thickness: this work has been done in order to get below the point on the surface where the gold was first found. Gold has been seen, and found payable, for a distance of 50ft. on this level, and it is expected that the remaining distance of 30ft. will also carry gold, making a shot of at least 80ft. Ninety tons of quartz from this claim produced 323oz. of melted gold, and there is a further quantity of eighty tons, awaiting the completion of the road to the battery, of a quality quite equal to the ninety tons already crushed. A number of new claims have been taken up in the immediate neighbourhood, and some of them have already struck gold, the prospects of all being good. There is a battery of ten stamps situate in the creek just below this cluster of claims: it is driven by water-power.

The claims known as "Blackmore's" and "Home Rule," which have been idle for some considerable period, have amalgamated, the ground comprised in both holdings being now called the Mariebel. The manager has succeeded in obtaining a fair show of gold, and is engaged in cleaning out the old workings and putting things in order, with the intention of commencing operations on the reef at once: the ground can easily be worked, and, as the company's battery is situated at the mouth of their main tunnel, even low-grade quartz should pay.

Vizard's holding, the Castle-Rock, has turned out only fifty-four tons of crushing stuff for the year, yielding at the rate of 3oz. of gold to the ton: a quantity of quartz is on hand, but, owing to the want of a road, cannot be crushed. In the Homeward Bound the tributers have a small leader in hand, comparatively rich, but so small as to be barely payable; they intend to test a large reef lately discovered in this ground.

New Union Beach: Some time ago this company attempted to test their ground below the 180ft. level by sinking a large winze therefrom, and placing a Tangye pump therein. They succeeded in sinking 70ft. and opened out on a leader at that depth; but, nothing payable being obtained, the enterprise was abandoned, principally for want of proper appliances with which to keep the water under: the deeper ground in this locality is therefore still untried.

The New United, Just-in-Time, and Iona Claims in this locality have all been unsuccessful in their operations during the year.

The New Zealand Kapanga Mine, which has been almost continuously worked since 1862, with varying success, have, during the year carried out extensive underground operations, at depths of 300ft. and 425ft. from surface. Five hundred tons of quartz were crushed, yielding 685oz. of gold, worth £1,918 14s. 2d., this result being obtained at an expenditure of over £6,000. The English shareholders by whom this mine is owned appear still sanguine of ultimate success: they most certainly deserve it. As an instance of the rich leaders occasionally found in this ground, I may mention that one piece of stone, weighing five pounds troy, on being crushed yielded 35oz. of melted gold.

The New Corby have not been successful in their operations for the year.

The Tokatea Gold-Mining Company have, with the exception of about three months' delay occasioned by the flood in July last, been occupied in pushing forward the low level, and stoping out the block of ground previously opened out. The country in the low level has been very hard, a series of flint belts of a most stubborn character occurring every two or three feet, so tough and hard that progress could only be made at the rate of 24ft. a month, with full shifts. This level is 2,600ft. in from the mouth, and 890ft. below the crown of the range. The company expect to cut the big reef in about 150ft. from the present face of the tunnel. Should it realize the hopes entertained of it and prove payable, it will open up an immense extent of country, and give employment to a large number of miners. The upper portion of the ground in this mine is being worked on tribute with moderate success.

The Royal Oak have been engaged in driving their low-level tunnel during the year, working the upper portion of the claim on tribute.

The Success: This is without doubt the most remarkable mine on the gold field: the leader, if such it may be called, is simply a fissure cutting clean through very hard rock: the fissure is followed,