

and here and there at intervals are found patches of nearly pure gold, mixed with a small quantity of soft mullock easily washed away in a dish. Occasionally quartz is met with, and some very rich specimens have been obtained; but the great bulk of the gold is washed out as described above. The gold is found in combination with lime (carbonate of lime), a somewhat unusual occurrence, I believe. This mine has been constantly worked for the last four years, turning out some thousands of pounds' worth of gold, yet a recent crushing of four tons of quartz, yielding 70oz. to the ton, is the first crushing that has taken place since the opening of the mine.

There are several claims now being worked in this neighbourhood, but as yet without success. A party of miners have for some months past been engaged in prospecting the Manaia District, some nine miles from the township (Kapanga). They have taken up one claim of thirty men's ground, but are very reticent as to the result of their prospecting.

The following are the statistics for the year: Warden's cases disposed of, 63; Resident Magistrate's cases—civil, 239; criminal, 42. Claims marked out 51; claims registered, 14; miners' rights issued, 125; quartz-crushing licenses issued, 10; gold-mining licenses issued, 4. The quantity of quartz crushed was 1,042 tons, for a yield of 4 017oz. 19dw. of gold, as against 2,907 tons and 7,010oz. for last year.

I have, &c.,

HARRY KENRICK,

Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

No. 2.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Thames, 18th May, 1884.

The principal feature of the year's work at the Thames proper has been the prospecting of the low levels in several of the mines, commenced and continued in consequence of the encouraging returns from the Prince Imperial Mine, obtained mainly from the rich shot in the 400-ft. level, a run of gold that it was believed would continue a greater depth. When reporting last year I referred to this find, which had then (31st March, 1883) given nearly 5,000oz. of gold. At the close of the present year (March, 1884) over 26,000oz. have been obtained from the year's crushing: the large lode in the ground known as the Mariner's Reef having yielded excellent returns, has helped to swell the total. The result of the year's work in this mine has therefore done much to inspire confidence, leading to the practical result of a very large expenditure on dead work in prospecting the lower levels of various mines.

The Prince Imperial have crushed, during the year ended the 31st March, 1884, 12,172 tons of stone for a yield of 21,125oz. 15dw. of gold. This splendid return, added to the previous yield of 9,700oz., has enabled the company, after paying large sums away for labour, &c., to form a respectable reserve fund to cover the expense of further prospecting, in addition to dividing the sum of £52,200 amongst the shareholders. As showing the uncertainty of gold-mining it may not be uninteresting to call attention to the fact that at the end of 1881 the ground comprising the property of this company was sold by public auction, together with all the winding-gear, machinery, &c., for the sum of £250, a shaft to the depth of 400ft., in good working order, being on the claim. With some difficulty a company was formed, with a nominal capital of £18,000, to work the ground, many of the most experienced men here declining to have anything to do with it. One call only, of 6d. per share, was made; whilst gold to the value of £73,295 has been won, and dividends to the amount of £2 18s. per share have been paid up to the date of the 31st March, 1884. The rich run of gold has so far run out, though there is a strong probability of its being picked up again at a lower level; but, as the present workings on the Mariner's Reef are more than payable, the prevalent belief is that the company will be enabled to pay dividends for some time, even if the specimen leader should not be picked up again.

The adjoining claims—Mariner, London, Queen of England, &c.—have done a considerable amount of dead work during the year in the erection of machinery and underground work in prospecting, but so far without success. They cannot be said to have explored their ground as yet, and most certainly, with the example of the Prince Imperial before them, have no grounds for discouragement.

In the Deep Level Cross, at the 640ft. level, the gratifying discovery of a gold-bearing leader has been made, thus proving that the gold descends to a much lower level than any in which it had before this discovery been found. The company are still working at this level. Foul air in this and other mines retarded operations considerably during the year.

A new venture, called the Caledonian Low-level Company, has been formed to work on tribute the low levels of various mines—Caledonian, Golden Crown, and others. Operations have been commenced at the 640-ft. level of the Deep Level Cross. A discovery in any of these mines would be of great importance to the future of this district. I need not refer more in detail to the various mines, the Mining Inspector's report furnishing full information; but, generally, I regret to report that the result of the year's operations has (apart from the returns of the Prince Imperial) not been so satisfactory as could have been wished, or perhaps might have been expected from the expenditure on new work. The year's yield of gold, it will be seen, is nearly 11,500oz. in excess of the previous year—54,865oz. 3dw. 8gr., as against 43,310oz. 12dw. 4gr. for the preceding year; but if we deduct the yield from the Mariner's Reef (21,125oz. 15dw.) the total yield would be some 10,000oz. less than the year before.

Some new claims have been taken up, which promise good results, viz., Darwin, Cambria, and recently the Belcher at Kanaka Creek. The Rocky Point and Adelaide Claims are approaching the time when they hope for some return for the large amount of time, money, and labour they have expended in their long tunnel.