

In the northern part of the district—Tapu, Waioma, and Tararu—but little work has been done during the year. At Waioma prospecting for silver has been carried on, a few men being employed on the lease granted, but with no tangible result as yet. At Tararu the workings on the Sunbeam Claim are still being carried on, with a view to test the value of the large lode of poor grade quartz in the ground, but so far with but poor results.

At Otanui, for want of a road to the battery, a few small parcels only have been crushed, with fair returns. There has been little work done during the past year.

At Karangahake, in spite of the promising aspect of the reefs, but little work has been carried on in many of the claims. A great deal of shepherding has been done, and the Mining Inspector has had to step in and forfeit a large number of claims for non-working. Six hundred and twenty tons of quartz have been crushed for the poor yield of 277oz. gold. The battery was stopped for some three months repairing damages caused by the floods. I am still of opinion that this locality will in the future form an important portion of the gold field, yielding considerable returns of gold. But work will require to be carried on in a somewhat different manner than at present.

At Rotokuhu, on the Karangahake Range, a find has recently been made that may yet prove both important and valuable. Many claims have been taken up in the locality, but too little work has been done to enable a reliable opinion to be given of the prospects. In the Prospector's Claim the country seems to be somewhat disturbed and broken, a clay slide at first cutting off the reef upon which the men were driving, but which was picked up again a few feet further on.

At Waihi steady work has been carried on during the year: 4,750 tons have been crushed, yielding 1,631oz. of melted gold, the first gold obtained from this portion of the district. The yield, though poor, is payable, the lode being of great size, easily worked and crushed. The companies own the battery, and have a good water-power. I anticipate that this district will continue to yield steady payable returns for some years to come.

The prospects of the future of the field generally will depend mainly upon the result of the work at present being carried on by the Deep-level Cross, Caledonian Low-level, Queen of Beauty, and Prince Imperial Mines. Should payable gold be opened up in their low-level workings a new impetus to mining will be given throughout the district. The outlying districts have, as yet, not appreciably added to the gold returns, but if fair work is carried on much may be expected from the Waihi and Karangahake now that the first rough work of prospecting has been overcome.

The total yield of gold for the year is 54,865oz. 3dwt. 8gr., obtained from 36,228 tons. For the preceding year the yield was 43,310oz. 12dwt. 4gr.

The following are the statistics for the year: Warden's Court—Cases commenced, 167; heard, 44; discontinued, 78. Resident Magistrate's Court: Civil cases commenced, 389; amount sued for, £29,936; amount recovered, £13,178; criminal cases disposed of, 344. At Paeroa 66 civil and 24 criminal cases were heard. Miners' rights issued, 604; claims notified marked out, 190; licensed holdings granted, 35; agricultural leases, 35; water-races, 2; machine sites, 2; residence sites applied for, 13, granted, 1; registration, 468.

I have, &c.,

HARRY KENRICK,

Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

No. 3.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Te Aroha, 19th April, 1884,

Until the completion of the tramway and battery, and the starting of the latter in November, 1883, the work on the various mines in this district was confined to surface prospecting in the majority, and the erection of shoots and hoppers in connection with the tramway by those claims who had arranged to be the first to send stone to the mill.

In November the battery started crushing on stone from the Premier, New-Find, Colonist, Werahiko, and Waitoki Claims, and, with occasional short stoppages for alterations, &c., continued crushing until the Christmas holidays. Work was not resumed after Christmas until the end of January, the miners having refused to accept a reduction of wages from 9s. to 8s. a day made by the companies. Eventually the majority gave way, returning to work at the reduced scale. Crushing was then resumed, and continued, with a few stoppages, until the end of March last, with the result that 4,316 tons of quartz were crushed, for a return of 4,546oz. 11dwt. 12gr. of gold: thus placing beyond a doubt the payable nature of the large reefs, from which nearly all the stone was taken. Experience thus far has shown that, in consequence of the fineness of the gold and, possibly, the presence of base metals, an unusually large percentage passes away in the tailings: these are being saved, and a careful test of some tons shows that from 1oz. to 1½oz. of gold may be saved from the ton of tailings, even then leaving a large quantity of gold to be accounted for: this, with the gold-saving appliances at present in use at the Aroha, it is to be feared must be considered as lost.

The Battery Company have just completed the erection of a very large and complete tailing plant for the purpose of treating the tailings. This being now at work should add materially to the yield of gold for the current year. It is estimated that some 2,000oz. of gold will be obtained from the tailings at present on hand. Particulars of this plant will be found in the Mining Inspector's report attached hereto. Since the end of the year (March) the battery has continued steadily at work, principally on stone from the New-Find and Colonist Claims, the yield being quite up to the average of the previous crushings, the result of which I have given. But it is quite evident that more crushing power is even now required, and as the various claims open up the lower levels the necessity will be urgent. An attempt, as yet unsuccessful, to float a new battery company is now being made. Though experience has shown that the tramway might have been more economically