

in the colony, it being 45ft. wide in places, and contains fairly good ore all through it. The present indications show it as being the most valuable mining property in the district.

TE AROHA.

At Te Aroha it is to be regretted that the Australian syndicate who purchased the plant and mining properties of Messrs. Firth and Clarke, at Waiorongomai, did not meet with success. After expending about £60,000 in the purchase of the properties, and in making additions to the plant, they omitted to leave a portion of their capital to prospect the mine, and the result has been that recently the plant and properties have been purchased for £3,500. Notwithstanding the great loss sustained by this company or syndicate, there are reasons to believe that the mines will turn out a deal of gold, and that Te Aroha will yet become a large mining district.

According to the returns supplied from the proprietors of the different milling plants in the North Island, the quantity of retorted gold obtained last year from the various fields was as follows: Coromandel, 9,838oz. 6dwt.; Thames, 38,112oz. 12dwt.; Ohinemuri, 1,279oz. 10dwt.; Te Aroha, 517oz.: making the total gold returns 49,757oz. 14dwt., representing a value of £128,416: and in addition to this there was 42,573oz. 14dwt. of bullion, of a value of £26,325, and ore was sold to the value of £4,508; thus making the value of the produce of the North Island goldfields to be £159,249; whereas, according to the Customs returns, the quantity entered for duty for exportation for the same period was 38,630oz., having a value of £153,678.

MAHAKIPAWA.

At Mahakipawa, the Ravenswood Company, of London, has purchased five of the licensed holdings which were taken up as quartz-claims. They are erecting crushing machinery and an aerial tramway to convey the quartz from the mines to the battery. But none of the quartz from this field has yet been tested in bulk. However, good prospects are said to have been obtained from tests in the hand-mortar, and the proprietors consider they have a valuable property.

REEFTON.

In the Reefton district a number of new discoveries have been made in the vicinity of Merrijigs, some of which are likely to prove highly payable. The principal gold-producing mines last year were the Globe, Progress, Inkerman, Keep It Dark, No. 2 South Keep It Dark, Cumberland, Golden Treasure, and Fiery Cross. The yield of gold last year was 23,347oz., having a value of £91,998, as against 17,780oz., representing a value of £69,777 for the previous year: thus showing an increased yield last year of 5,567oz. gold, representing a value of £22,322; whilst the amount paid in dividends was £27,325, against £18,250 for the previous year. The prospects in the district are much brighter than they have been for years past.

OTAGO.

In Otago some of the quartz mines are not turning out according to expectations, as, for instance, those in the Nenthorn district, which have, so far, proved a failure; but none of the claims have ever been tested to any great depth, the outcrops of the lodes having only been worked. In the Lake District, at Skipper's and the Shotover, the Phoenix and Gallant Tipperary Company's mines are looking well, and the same can be said of the Sunrise Mine at Macetown.

ALLUVIAL MINING.

I now come to alluvial mining, which is entirely confined to the Middle Island. This branch of mining consists of working the auriferous drifts from shafts, adits, and by hydraulic sluicing and dredging. Alluvial mining proper may be said to be confined to ground worked from shafts and adit levels, such as the workings in the deep ground at Mahakipawa, in the Marlborough District, and at Rimu, Back Creek, and Ross, on the West Coast; but by far the greater portions of the auriferous drifts are worked by hydraulic sluicing.

MAHAKIPAWA.

The workings at Mahakipawa are very limited, being confined to the creek-bed and the small flat at the mouth of the gorge. It is not yet known whether the gold will continue to go far into this flat. So far, this has been a good field, and has been the means of supporting a population of from two hundred and fifty to four hundred since it was opened,