

Several other licensed holdings and claims have been taken up in the locality, and prospecting is being carried on; but, on account of the inaccessible nature of the country, and distance from the mill, time will be required to develop the district.

WAIHI DISTRICT.

Waihi Mine, 294 acres (Waihi Gold-mining Company, Limited, owner; Mr. Henry Dale, general manager, and Mr. Thomas Gilmour, mine-manager).—One hundred and sixty wages-men were employed, and the quantity of quartz crushed was 11,319 tons, which yielded 18,407oz. of bullion. The chief work in the mine has been in the Martha section. The smithy level has been extended to the westward, and is now in a distance on the reef of 475ft., and on the intermediate level the drive in the reef is in a distance of 100ft. The surface part of the reef is now being worked in an open cutting, and it is from this part and the stopes over the smithy level that the principal quantity of quartz crushed has been obtained. The main drives on the reef are well timbered with heavy sets; the stopes are kept well filled up and secure: 580 fathoms of the reef have been taken out of the open cuttings and stopes. The thickness of the reef worked is upwards of 20ft. The tramway from the Martha reef workings is about 40 chains in length, and a wooden tramway about two miles and a half in length is used for conveying timber from the bush. Another cross-cut level for a main adit is now being driven to cut the Martha reef about 50ft. under the smithy level. The drive will be about 1,500ft. in length, and is in a distance of 510ft. The dimensions of the drive within timbers are: 7ft. high, 5ft. 10in. at top, and 7ft. wide at the bottom. The timbers are from 10in. to 14in. through, and the sets have to be placed within a few inches of each other to support the pressure, the ground already driven through being near the surface and of the consistency of soft mud for a considerable distance.

In the Union section of the mine a cross-cut 334ft. in length has been driven from the shaft, and the reef cut from 2ft. to 4ft. in thickness, giving rich prospects. This part of the mine promises to yield good returns.

The battery has been largely added to during the year; thirty new stamps have been erected, and twenty of these are being used for wet-crushing, the other ten being used with the first thirty stamps erected in crushing dry. The wet-crushed ore is run in a flume to an elevating-wheel 26ft. in diameter, and the sand and slimes raised and run into settling-tanks. These tanks are seven in number, and have a capacity of 110ft. by 16ft. by 14ft. in depth. The sand and slimes settle satisfactorily, the water running back to the stamps very clear. The sand and slimes are drawn from the tanks into trucks, which are elevated by hydraulic appliance and conveyed to the pans on a tramway.

Another gold-saving process is to be adopted in connection with this mine, namely, the Bohm Company's, which is an adaptation of the cyanide process. The respective merits of the dry- and wet-crushing are being fairly ascertained at the works of this mine. Sufficient time, however, has not elapsed to enable the manager to determine which is the most profitable, but he expresses an opinion that, as far as can be seen, calcining the ore is an advantage whether the wet or dry process is used.

Silverton Mine, 70 acres (Silverton Gold-mining Company, Limited, owner; Mr. John McCombie, manager).—The average number of men employed at the mine and in the erection of the mill has been ten. No driving has been done during the year, but about 300 tons of ore have been broken out from the main reef, averaging 8ft. in thickness, and the stuff is now being carted to the mill, where crushing operations will be started upon it next month. The mill comprises fifteen heads of stamps, two of Stevenson's amalgamating pans, one settler, one agitator, and one berdan, driven by a 35-horse power Leffel turbine. The excavations are now in progress up to the starting-point of the low-level tunnel, which will be 1,700ft. in length, and will afford nearly 60ft. of backs beneath the lowest level of the present workings.

Gladstone Mine, 30 acres (Wood and party, owners).—The prospecting drive, which was in 500ft. at the end of last year, has been extended 90ft., and a reef cut 7ft. in thickness, the value of which has not been ascertained. Two men have been employed.

Attempts have been made to sink shafts by the owners of the Waitete on the south-west end, and the Grand Junction on the north-east end, of the Martha section, but from the quantity of water found it will be necessary to provide pumping-appliances in both shafts.

PIAKO COUNTY.

WAIORONGOMAI DISTRICT.

Te Aroha Mines, 26 acres 2 roods 32 perches (H. H. Adams, owner and manager).—An average of ten men were employed. Work was carried on in the New Find section and the Warrior (late Colonial) section, and 640 tons of quartz were crushed for 331oz. 8dwt. of gold.

Ferguson's Special Claim Mine, 66 acres (Ferguson's Syndicate, owners).—This mine has been worked by Newsham and party, and Ferguson and party, tributers. Two men were employed, and 806 tons of quartz were crushed for 251oz. 7dwt. of gold.

Werahiko Mine, 4 acres 2 roods 4 perches.—Two tributers were employed, and 22 tons of quartz crushed for 12oz. 17dwts. of gold.

Warrior Mine, 10 acres 1 rood 16 perches (Mr. Thomas Gavan, owner).—Two tributers were employed, and 89 tons of quartz crushed yielded 40oz. 19dwt. of gold.

Several other parties have taken up claims recently.

The crushing-plant at Waiorongomai, which consists of fifty stamps, furnaces, pans and berdans, is being dismantled, twenty stamps and thirty berdans only are to be retained by Mr. Adams.

The Ferguson's crushing-plant has been sold and removed.

TUI DISTRICT.

The Champion Mine has virtually been closed during the year. There is a large quantity of low-grade ore which cannot at present be worked.