

## GOLD- AND SILVER-MINING.

The results of the mining operations for last year show a decrease of 47,876oz. of gold from the results of the previous year. The yield last year (which has been obtained from the quantity entered at the Customs for export) was 228,659oz., as against 276,535oz. for the preceding year, as will be seen from the following statement :—

Name of District.	Year ending 31st March, 1893.		Year ending 31st March, 1892.		Increase for 1893.	Decrease for 1893.
	Oz.	£	Oz.	£	Oz.	Oz.
Auckland .. .. .	41,052	165,849	40,525	162,760	527	..
Marlborough .. .. .	3,055	12,083	7,020	28,026	..	3,965
Nelson .. .. .	2,792	10,609	5,301	20,192	..	2,509
West Coast .. .. .	101,636	406,523	118,158	472,672	..	16,522
Otago .. .. .	80,124	322,403	105,531	423,527	..	25,407
	228,659	917,467	276,535	1,107,177	..	47,876

The foregoing table shows an increase in the Auckland District during last year of 527oz. of gold ; but, in reality, this is not the whole of the increased production of bullion, inasmuch as the bullion shipped is taken for the quantity of gold which it contains. According to the battery-returns from the North Island last year, the value of the gold extracted from the ore, the bullion produced, and the value of ore sold, amounted to £189,393 18s. 11d. ; whereas the total value for the previous year was £176,070 18s., showing an increase in last year's operations of £13,323 0s. 11d.

With regard to the large decrease shown in the foregoing statement for last year, it must be borne in mind that there was included in the statement for the year ending 31st March, 1892, 18,270oz. of gold which was held back by the different banks in the Middle Island, but which was produced during the year ending 31st March, 1891. Therefore, this amount must be deducted from the decrease shown for the past year, which will make the actual yield last year only 29,606oz. less than that for the previous year. The principal decreases were from the Counties of Inangahua, 13,539oz. ; Tuapeka, 7,876oz. ; Vincent, 6,564oz. ; Lake County, 4,514oz. ; and Marlborough, 3,965oz. Some of the other counties also show small decreases.

The returns of silver obtained cannot be ascertained, as it is shipped in the shape of bullion. The only record obtainable is from the Customs returns. These returns show that during last year the banks shipped 22,053oz., representing a value of £3,996. The production of silver is likely to be largely increased, as it is now more sought after than it was in former years. At Waihi and Karangahake a large percentage of silver is in the ores, and it will be extracted by the use of the Cassel plants now in course of erection on each of those fields. Silver-ore has also been discovered at the Great Barrier Island, as well as at Puhipuhi ; and although all workings have for the present been suspended at the latter place, there is little doubt that claims will yet be taken up and worked with suitable machinery, none of which has yet been brought on the field.

## QUARTZ WORKINGS.

## NORTH ISLAND.

## AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

*Puhipuhi.*

This field to some extent resembles Karangahake when it was first opened in 1875. Numbers of people rushed to the place, many of whom had no mining experience whatever, and they embarked in mining returns in the anticipation that a new Eldorado was about to be opened, where everyone would make his fortune with very little work, and that the mere fact of being fortunate to secure ground on the field gave them a property that would realise sufficient money to give them a good start in life. The excitement as to silver being found in a portion of the colony where no mining had previously been carried on was so great that nearly everyone in and about Whangarei readily embarked in mining ventures in the full anticipation that their investment would in a short time return them a hundred-fold.

The prospectors of the field found some fair silver on and near the outcrops of several lodes through their ground ; and, although scarcely any of them had much experience in mining, they soon thought that they had gained sufficient to enable them to carry on their operations with success. After opening out on one of the lodes, they found a fair quantity of ore ; which, according to assay, showed that it was payable for working if sufficient appliances were on the ground. They however purchased an obsolete plant, part of which had been used for crushing cement, but it had never before been used in the colony for quartz-crushing. They were strongly advised by those who had some knowledge of the subject on no account to erect this plant, as it was not capable of dealing with the class of ore to be treated ; but, a small sum only being required, and money being a great object, the prospectors decided to purchase the plant on receiving a guarantee from the seller that it would do the work satisfactorily. Representations were made to the Government as to the urgent necessity for opening up the field by a road. The field, however, being situated partly in the Whangarei County and partly in the Bay of Islands County, there was some difference of opinion as to where the road should be constructed. The result was, however, that a road was laid out and constructed on what is known as the " air-line," which brought the field into more direct communication with the Township and Port of Whangarei. The cost of this road was defrayed by a direct grant of money from the Government, it having been represented that it would only amount to a specified sum ; but, unfortunately, the estimate was largely exceeded, and when the road was formed it was found that it