

is also on the same belt of country where the Waiomo lodes exist, and in all probability this belt will be traced in the direction of Kuaotunu. The gold is somewhat similar in character to that found at Kuaotunu, being extremely fine, and will be difficult to save by the ordinary battery process of treatment. There has scarcely been any prospecting done in this belt of country, and it is only by chance that any lodes have been struck. It is only by men following the avocation of gum-digging that lodes in the back ranges are likely to be discovered. The whole of the Hauraki Peninsula is auriferous, less or more, and large lodes of quartz are cropping out here and there, but the difficulty of access precludes any reasonable quantity of the ore being conveyed to a crushing-battery for treatment. The mere fact of a few rich specimen-stones being found is no criterion that the lodes will pay for working, and, until such time as this new find is prospected at a deeper level, very little can be said regarding it, beyond the fact that it is in a belt of country where auriferous lodes are likely to exist.

Tararu.

There has been a considerable falling-off in the yield of gold from this locality. Last year there was 4,220 tons of quartz crushed, which yielded 529oz. 7dwt. of gold, and 3,985oz. 5dwt. of bullion, of a value of £2,182 11s. 8d., which is equal to about 839oz. of gold. This makes the total gold obtained to be 1,368oz. 7dwt., as against 3,865oz. 12dwt. for the previous year. The Sylvia Company have been unsuccessful in carrying on operations last year, and had to close down their works. The result has been that the whole of the valuable plant, mine, and aerial tramway was sold by the mortgagee for about £600, the purchaser being Mr. Darrell of the Thames.

The *Norfolk Company* have been steadily carrying on operations, but not with success, the ore being of a very refractory character. They crushed 1,700 tons of stone for a yield of 392oz. of gold. Several parties have been prospecting lodes at the head and upper portion of Tararu Creek, with the view of opening up fresh ground; but, although some fair specimens have been got in this locality, nothing is yet definitely known as to the value of any fresh discovery.

Shellback.

There are about eleven men working in this locality—namely, six wages-men and five tributers, but, taking the quantity of gold obtained last year, namely, 151oz. 19dwt., or 13oz. 16dwt. 6gr. of gold per man for the year, it shows that the mines in this locality must have been worked at a loss.

Kuranui.

This is a locality in the Thames District likely to continue to give small returns for a large number of years. The whole of the Kuranui Hill is a network of auriferous quartz-veins and leaders. During the last year there was 13,173 tons of mullock crushed, which yielded 3,032oz. 3dwt. of gold, and 1,514½ tons of quartz was crushed, yielding 772oz. 16dwt. of gold. There are three gold-producing claims in this locality—namely, Hansen's, Comer's, and the Hazelbank.

Hansen's Claim.—There have been eight wages-men and fifteen tributers at work last year in this claim, which got 2,906 tons of mullock, and 762½ tons of quartz, yielding respectively 136oz. 6dwt. and 490oz. 11dwt. of gold; the mullock averaging about 21·7gr. of gold per ton.

Comers' Claim.—There was 10,267 tons of mullock crushed from this claim, which yielded 663oz. 10dwt. of gold, being an average of 1dwt. 7gr. of gold per ton; and 154 tons of quartz, yielding 186oz. 6dwt. of gold.

Hazelbank.—This is the ground which formerly was held by the old Caledonian Company, and where one of the richest deposits of gold was found that has ever been discovered in New Zealand. It is still a gold-producing claim. During last year there were twenty-seven men employed on wages and five men as tributers; and 1,738½ tons of stone was crushed, which yielded 2,328oz. 6dwt. of gold, being an average of 72oz. 15dwt. for every man employed in the claim.

Moanataiari.

There has been a considerable amount of work done in this part of the Thames District; the principal gold-producing company last year in this locality being the Moanataiari, New Alburnia, Dixon Extended, and the New Whau. There was 19,822 tons of stone crushed, and 6,257 tons of mullock treated, from the claims in this part of the field, which yielded 10,070oz. 6dwt. of gold, as against a yield for the former year of 8,209oz. 16dwt. There were, however, thirty-three more men employed in the mines last year than for the previous one. Taking the amount of gold produced for the year and the number of men employed, it gives an average of 45oz. 16dwt. 8gr. of gold for every man employed, as against 43oz. 13dwt. 9gr. for 1892.

Moanataiari Company.—This company is the largest employer of labour in the Thames District, there being eighty-eight men employed on wages, and fifty-seven on tribute, in connection with the mine last year. The position of the ground the company holds, and the long adit-level from the ocean-beach back into the hill, gives them the key to a large area of the back country, as the ground can be worked far more cheaply from this adit-level than it could possibly be from shafts; the cost of transit of the quartz to the crushing-battery being a great element in the saving itself. It is a part of the district where a considerable amount of gold will be got for many years, and the extension of their adit-level will always open up fresh ground. During last year they crushed 11,734 tons of stone and 5,257 tons of mullock for themselves, which yielded 5,039½oz. of gold; and 2,752½ tons of stone was crushed for tributers, which yielded 1,390oz. of gold.