

sides of the hill, the lode on the eastern side being worked from the Red Mercury No. 2 level and on the western side from the low-level adit. During the past year there has been an average of twenty men employed, and 587 tons of quartz from the mine has been crushed, which yielded 562oz. 1dwt. of gold. In addition to this, 523 tons of tailings was treated by the cyanide process, which yielded 313½oz. of gold, making the total gold obtained last year to be 875oz. 16dwt., representing a value of £1,995 11s. 2d. The owners have great expectations that the future returns from the mine will be such as to yield them a handsome profit.

*Just in Time, Otama, Waitaia, and Aorere.*—These mines have been worked entirely by tributers. Last year there were fifteen men employed in the whole of these mines; while 260 tons of stone have been crushed for a yield of 565oz. 15dwt. of gold. The returns from the Waitaia being the best, which were 329oz. for six men. Great expectations have been from time to time formed that something handsome would be got, but so far only disappointments have been met with; but there has been comparatively little prospecting in the Waitaia Block. Some very large lodes run through the country, but so far payable gold has not been discovered in them.

The returns from the other claims on the field are very small, and cannot be said to have been remunerative for working during the past year.

In concluding my remarks on the Coromandel district, there is at the present a great excitement in mining, and properties are taken up readily, no doubt with a view to the disposing of them in the London market; but those who have the welfare of the colony at heart would do well to pause before rushing mining properties on the English market when there is not a fair and reasonable prospect of the investors' money being returned with fair interest. If care is not taken in this direction now, when there is an inclination on the part of foreign people to put their capital in mining investments in the colony, a collapse will ensue, and the people of the colony generally will have to suffer for the grabbing propensities of a few others. Such finds as that got in the Hauraki Company's mine tends to lead outside people away with the belief that every property in the vicinity is likely to turn out equally as well, and it is only after their experience is dearly purchased that the delusion is done away with.

There is a reasonable chance of some good mining properties being developed in the Coromandel district, and no doubt many new discoveries will yet be made, as the whole of the Hauraki Peninsula is auriferous, and extends for a long distance to the southward. Generally, however, there are certain narrow belts of country in which auriferous lodes exist—that is, the character of the country-rock in these belts indicate the probability of rich gold-bearing quartz-reefs being found. The whole of the belt of country between the ocean beach at the Coromandel shaft and the Tokatea Hill is likely to contain rich blocks of stone. A large quantity of gold was obtained by the Union Beach Company from the ground now held by the Hauraki Company. Rich finds have also been found in the Kapanga Mine, and the whole of the Tokatea Range is a mass of lodes, leaders, and stringers of quartz, from which not only a very large quantity of gold has been obtained, but occasionally very rich specimen stone is still being got by men having tributes in the different mines.

This range has been one of the best quartz districts in the colony for the individual miner; but the upper portion of the hill is now become so riddled with adits and drives that one would hardly expect that many more large finds would be made. This hill has never been prospected at any great depth, and there is a large reef running through it containing gold where scarcely any prospecting has been done, which will, in my opinion, yet prove a considerable source of wealth; but it requires a large capital to properly develop it. There is sufficient low grade in sight to keep a crushing-battery of forty, if not more, heads of stamps working for many years; and no doubt rich blocks of stone will be found in it.

Again, in the *Just in Time* and *Iona* Mines, which have never been properly prospected, rich stone has been found; from the ground in the *Just in Time* 1,967oz. gold is said to have been obtained at comparative shallow levels. The *Blagrove*, although a little to one side, is on the same belt of country, and if prospecting be systematically carried on there is a fair and reasonable prospect that success will attend development in these directions.

On another belt of country very rich quartz leaders have been found in a claim formerly known as the *Success*, and now known as the *Try Again*. In the early working of this claim, gold was found in one of these narrow stringers in thin sheets, which could be rolled up, and from time to time since rich specimens have been found. In 1893 a specimen stone was obtained which yielded respectively 192oz., 73oz., and 277oz. 11dwt. gold, having an aggregate value of £1,422 9s. 10d.; and in the following year a small parcel of 8cwt. of stone and 14lb. of specimens, which were treated at the School of Mines at the Thames, yielded gold to the value of £131 16s. 5d. The present proprietor, Mr. G. James, is now said to have on hand 20 tons of fair stone, 2 tons of picked quartz, and 10lb. of specimens ready to send to the mill.

In the *Waikoromiko*, which is a continuation of the *Tokatea* Range, very rich specimen stone has been obtained from time to time out of small leaders and stringers of quartz, but no lodes of any size have been found as yet of a payable character. Where such rich stone is found, there is reasonable hopes that lodes will yet be discovered which will give good returns for working. For years past the men that have been prospecting here have not had the means of carrying on prospecting operations on any large scale.

Again, at *Kuaotunu*, which is one of the most recently discovered fields in the Coromandel district, a large lode of stone was found in the *Try Fluke* Claim which yielded 10oz. of gold per ton, and during the last four years that the battery-returns have been supplied me there has been 14,733oz. 15dwt. of gold obtained from this mine, which is nearly one-half the total gold obtained from the *Kuaotunu* field for the same period, the total yield being 29,734oz. 4dwt. The following statement will show the returns of quartz crushed and tailings treated, with the yield of gold therefrom, the area of ground held in mining claims, and the number of men employed either as owners, wages-men, or tributers in the Coromandel district for the year ending the 31st March last:—