

Beauty shaft has been sunk to a considerable depth below the 500 ft. level in the Big Pump shaft it cannot be ascertained whether the drainage of the field can be effected without a drainage-channel being constructed. The pump at the Queen of Beauty shaft is now taking portion of the water from the Saxon and Cardigan lodes, in the Saxon section of the May Queen (Hauraki) property. At the same time there is a considerable quantity of water flowing along the drainage-levels out of the Saxon and May Queen sections to the Big Pump. Indeed, the fall of the present levels in all the mines being towards the Big Pump, unless the water drains through the rock from the Big Pump shaft the drainage of the field cannot be completely effected by the new pumping machinery. It is not for me to say whether this water-way would prove of the greatest benefit if driven at the level of the 640 ft. Big Pump or at a greater depth, but the earliest drainage of the present deep-working mines would result from proceeding with this work as soon as the Queen of Beauty shaft and pumps have been completed to a suitable depth. The work being now performed by both plants, arrangements between the parties interested must sooner or later be made for equitable participation in the sums raised by assessment for drainage purposes, and the future incidence of assessment must of necessity be readjusted to meet the altered conditions now existing.

Waiotahi District.

Waiotahi Mine (Area, 22 acres; owner, Waiotahi Gold-mining Company; mine-manager, J. E. Smith).—This mine is worked from a shaft the depth of which is 340 ft., the depth of workings below the surface also being 340 ft. There are four levels opened from this shaft—viz., 1, 2, 3, and 4. The reefs, which are in a sandstone country, vary in width from $\frac{1}{4}$ in. to 5 ft. The development work during the year consisted of driving, stoping, and sinking winzes. The machinery consists of one 16-horse-power steam-engine for winding, also one 16-horse-power steam-engine for driving the mill, which consists of twenty-one heads of stamps and five berdans; value, £4,000. The quantity of quartz crushed was 1,090 tons, for a yield of 1,653 oz. 16 dwt. of gold; value, £4,571 5s. The number of wages-men employed for the year was sixteen.

Nonpareil Mine (Area, 21 acres; owner, Nonpareil Gold-mining Company; mine-manager, John Rickard).—There are two levels from which the mine is worked, the adit being 520 ft. in length, and the other 250 ft. There are several reefs in the ground; the one on which most of the work has been done is 18 in. in width. The mine is now chiefly worked by tributers, ten of whom are engaged, the company only having four men on wages. The quantity of quartz crushed for the company was 34 tons, which yielded 208 oz. 11 dwt., of the value of £723 2s.; and for tributers 154 tons, for a yield of 234 oz. 15 dwt., valued at £642 6s. 3d.: total tons crushed, 188; yield, 443 oz. 6 dwt.; value, £1,213 9s. 6d.

Fame and Fortune Mine, Thames (Area, 71 acres 3 roods 21 perches; owners, E. Kersey Cooper and others; manager, Henry Willetts).—This mine was taken over by the Hauraki Golden Age Gold-mining Company, who erected a 40-stamp mill for the treatment of the ore, but operations were discontinued on the property, and no quartz was treated. The property has latterly been worked by Mr. E. Kersey Cooper, who has renovated the old crushing-mill, and intends to recommence crushing at an early date. The mine is well opened up, six different levels being in working use, and it is intended to extend one of the levels of the Moanataiari Mine, in order to prospect the Golden Age reef at a greater depth.

Waiokaraka District.

May Queen Hauraki (Area, 173 acres 1 rood 18 perches; owners, May Queen Hauraki, Limited).—The operations in this company's mine during the past year have been confined to working the No. 2 Cardigan lode, which traverses the Saxon section of this company's property. The whole of the lodes that were previously known to exist in both the Saxon and May Queen sections of the mine that were considered payable for working were stoped out down to the drainage-level by the previous holders of the property. At the time the mine became the property of the present company no great amount of ore of a payable character was known to exist in the mine above the drainage-level, and the quantity of water to contend with below that level was such that it could not be lifted unless the company erected large pumping machinery of its own to drain the claim. As the greater portion of the ground held by the company is within the drainage area which is under the control of the Drainage Board, which has the power to levy rates for drainage purposes, to pay over to any one who drains that area, the present company did not deem it expedient to erect a large pumping plant, seeing the Thames-Hauraki Company were erecting a powerful pumping plant under a specific agreement with the Government to drain the deep levels on the Thames Goldfield to a depth of at least 1,000 ft. A cross-cut from the lowest, or drainage, level was constructed to prospect the portion of the May Queen Special Claim between the workings of the Saxon section and the boundary with the Thames-Hauraki Mine. This cross-cut intersected two lodes known as No. 1 and No. 2 Cardigan lodes. The No. 1 lode was first cut, but the ore was of too low grade to pay for working. The lode was driven on for a distance of about 300 ft. without obtaining any beneficial result. The cross-cut was extended for an additional 140 ft., when it intersected the No. 2 lode. The first parcel of ore from this yielded at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz. gold to the ton. A level was constructed westward from the intersection of the cross-cut with the No. 2 lode to the boundary of the Cardigan Claim, and also in the opposite direction, until the lode went into a hard bar of andesite, which was known to exist between the Saxon section and the Thames-Hauraki pump-shaft. This lode was stoped out up to a height of about 70 ft. above the level by the company with wages-men, and in December last it was let to a party of tributers, who are still working it. From the 1st April to December the company crushed 2,139 tons of ore, which yielded 1,866 oz. 10 dwt. of gold, representing a value of £5,167 13s. 10d.; and up to the 31st March last the tributers have crushed 199 tons, which yielded 351 oz. gold, having a value of £963 15s. 6d., making the total number of tons crushed for the year 2,338, yielding 2,217 oz. 10 dwt. gold, having a value