

During last year 214,815 tons of quartz and tailings were treated in the Auckland District, yielding 498,074 oz. bullion, representing an estimated value of £575,642 as against bullion to the value of £405,745 for the former year, being an increase of £169,897. In the Nelson and West Coast Districts 66,116 tons of quartz were crushed for a return of 27,165 oz. of gold, valued approximately at £109,019, an increase of £81,988 on the previous year. In the Otago District 19,564 tons of quartz was treated for a yield of 9,870 oz. of gold, the estimated value being £38,493, a decrease of £29,407 on the previous year's return. The total for the colony was 300,495 tons treated for 535,109 oz. of gold, and bullion valued at £723,154.

As to the methods of extraction, it will be interesting to note that 465,176 oz., of the value of £489,767, were obtained by the cyanide process; 1,271 oz., of the value of £5,315, by chlorination; and 68,697 oz., of the value of £228,072, by amalgamation, showing that nearly 87 per cent. of the quantity was obtained by cyanide, 0·237 per cent. by chlorination, and 12·837 per cent. by amalgamation. The proportions of the values were: By cyanide, 67·726 per cent.; chlorination, 0·737 per cent.; and amalgamation, 31·538 per cent.

COROMANDEL COUNTY.

The Hauraki Mine still continues to furnish a fair quantity of gold; the Kapanga returns are of a substantial character; the Royal Oak has yielded profitable returns, with every prospect of their continuance; and the Hauraki Associated has given fair yields. As the Kauri Freehold Gold Estates has now started crushing, the returns from this property will, it is anticipated, materially add to next year's yield, as extensive blocks are opened up for stoping, and a large stack of quartz is in readiness to be treated.

The Kuaotunu District may be expected to furnish continued payable returns. The Mariposa is opening up ground at deeper levels. The Kapai-Vermont and Great Mercury Mines have changed owners, and this will probably lead to a better conduct of future mining operations.

The nature of the deposits throughout Coromandel District is such that hopes may be entertained that fresh finds will follow systematic prospecting in many of the mines. The total returns for the year from this district were 12,269 tons, yielding 20,138 oz., valued at £53,829, as against £73,337 for the previous year. Although the returns are considerably less than those of the preceding year, there are indications that next year's yield will show an increase.

The principal returns were: From the Hauraki Mine, 2,090 tons 0 qr. 72 lb., producing 5,645 oz. 11 dwt., valued at £16,545 7s. 4d.; Royal Oak, 270 tons 4 cwt. 35 lb., yielding 5,137 oz. 13 dwt., valued at £12,942 8s.; Kapanga, 311 tons 7 cwt. 76 lb., giving a yield of 2,600 oz. 3 dwt., valued at £7,632 5s. 10d.; Hauraki Associated, 506 tons 8 cwt. 7 lb., producing 1,352 oz., value £3,850 7s. 8d.; Mariposa, 2,812 tons, yielding 1,628 oz. 19 dwt., valued at £3,740 13s. 2d.; and Great Mercury, 1,202 tons crushed for 1,132 oz., of the value of £2,527 6s. 4d. Hauraki Gold-mining Company, Coromandel: the total amount of gold raised by this company up to the 30th of June last was £254,162 13s. 6d.

THAMES COUNTY.

The yield of gold for the year shows a considerable increase compared with the return for 1897-98, and the outlook for next year is of a hopeful character throughout the district. The Thames-Hauraki Company, in carrying on pumping operations at the southern end of the Thames Borough portion of the field, has unwatered a large block of ground in which reefs of a promising character, may now be developed. The Waiotahi Mine continues to maintain its character, and the company are still enabled to pay regular dividends; while the new blocks of ground opened at the lately-drained levels in the Cardigan and May Queen Mines show indications of profitable yields in the near future.

The prospecting operations in the New Alburnia, Moanataiari, Kuranui, and Kuranui-Caledonian Mines are carried on in localities where rich deposits were