

by cyanide yielded £10,204 14s. 7d., and 1,105 tons of pyritic slimes and concentrates chlorinated gave a return of £11,238 4s. 7d., making a total value of £96,851 8s. 6d., which gives an average of £1 12s. 3·4d. per ton of stone milled. The total working-cost is given as 18s. per ton. Ore-values have shown a slight falling-off during the year, owing to the lower grade of quartz mined as compared with that of previous years, and, judging from the general appearances of the ore in sight, it is anticipated that the results of this year's working will not prove so profitable even as those of last year.

The Wealth of Nations Mine, at Crushington, near Reefton, has been worked during the year with a view to concentrating operations underground, so that the inconvenience attending the haulage up an inside incline shaft might be dispensed with, and the Energetic shaft (which has been equipped with a modern winding plant) used for the purposes of the mine. The output of quartz for the year was 11,970 tons, the recovery of precious metal by the several processes being as follows:—Amalgamation, £13,662 19s. 6d.; cyanide, £5,420 16s. 1d.; concentrates and slimes, £764 14s. 10d.; making a total of £19,848 10s. 5d., or equivalent to an average value of £1 13s. 1·2d. per ton of stone milled.

At the Golden Fleece Mine, at Black's Point, near Reefton, the output of quartz was suspended for a portion of the year in order to admit of the old Golden Fleece shaft being deepened so as to provide a more rapid and efficient means of ingress to and egress from the working-faces. At the battery 13,985 tons of stone was crushed for a return of £28,463 1s. 5d., made up as follows: By amalgamation, £23,165 11s. 8d.; by concentration, £1,955 8s. 8d.; by cyanide treatment, £3,342 1s. 1d. The value per ton of stone milled averaged £2 0s. 8·4d.

The Wealth of Nations and the Golden Fleece Mines are owned by the Consolidated Goldfields of New Zealand (Limited).

The Keep-it-Dark Mine maintains its reputation as a paying concern, and recent developments go to show that the outlook is of a promising nature, the reef at the lowest working-level and the winze below being well defined and of good width and quality. 12,730 tons of ore was treated at the battery, and yielded by amalgamation and cyanide treatment £19,351 15s. 11d., or an average of £1 10s. 4·8d. per ton. In addition to this, a quantity of concentrates was shipped and sold.

Operations at the New Inkerman Mines have ceased, and the property has been purchased by the Consolidated Goldfields of New Zealand (Limited). The late owners worked the mine during the early part of the year, but the results obtained were too poor to warrant the continuation of operations. A large amount of capital has been spent in exploration and development-work, and the existence of ore-bodies is known, but evidently the value of the stone is poor. 3,330 tons of ore treated gave a return of £2,811 8s., or equal to 16s. 10·6d. per ton.

Mining operations at Merrijigs have not during the last few years been of a profitable or encouraging character generally, and at the present time the industry is, practically speaking, a dead-letter.

Mr. P. N. Kingswell, the owner of the Victoria and Inglewood Mine, has carried on operations during the year, 1,730 tons of stone treated at the battery gave a gold-yield, by amalgamation, to the value of £3,648 17s. 7d., and by subsequent cyanide treatment 1,505 tons of sands yielded a gold-value of £2,032 10s. 11d., making a total of £5,681 8s. 6d., which sum, divided by the number of tons of ore sent to the battery, gives an average value of £3 5s. 8·1d. per ton.

A good average value is maintained at the Big River Mine, 920 tons of ore won during the year yielding gold to the value of £3,514 8s. 3d., equivalent to £3 16s. 7·4d. per ton, or some 2s. 7d. per ton better average than the returns for the previous year. The ground at this mine is patchy, the stone occurring in blocks, which, as a general rule, are of good average value. The shaft is now 1,200 ft. deep.

Some work on a small scale has been done at various claims in the vicinity of Reefton, from some of which a little gold has been obtained, whilst at others the operations have been generally more of a prospecting character.

The Garden Gully Mine, situated in the Paparoa Ranges, above Blackball Township, has been opened up to some extent, and the battery from the Ceresus Mine removed and re-erected for the purposes of the Garden Gully Mine, at which the general arrangements of plant were nearly completed at the end of the year. The proprietary hope to commence operations on a commercial scale early in the new year.

Towards the close of 1905 and during the early part of the present year a considerable amount of attention was, and still is, being given to the locality of Blackwater as a likely field for auriferous quartz reefs. Some very promising reefs have been found, and prospecting is being vigorously prosecuted. It is too soon to make any estimate of the possibilities of the district; but doubtless a considerable amount of reliable information will be available by the end of the year, and will naturally be embodied in the next Mines Report.

The Westland (or Wilberforce) reefs, which are found near the summit of the dividing-range between Westland and Canterbury, have been the object of attention during the year, thirteen prospecting areas of 100 acres each having been already taken up. Wilson's Reward Claim is on the eastern side of the range, and it is reported that a reef 21 ft. in width has been cut, giving an assay value of about £2 14s. per ton. It is proposed to open out the claim from the Westland side, towards which the underlie of the reef appears to dip. For the purpose of enabling samples of quartz from this hitherto unworked and somewhat inaccessible field to be tested, it has been decided by the Government to erect a small battery of two stamps.

Detailed reports of the working of the mines in the Marlborough, Nelson, and West Coast districts are made by Mr. Tennent, Inspector of Mines, and Wardens Smith, Kenny, and Kenrick.

In the Southern Mining District (comprising Canterbury, Otago, and Southland) there are not at the present time any quartz-mines which compare with the principal mines of either the Northern or West Coasts districts; but it is pleasing to note that an increased amount of attention is being paid