

May Queen Extended.—Early in the year work was confined to driving on a leader westward at the No. 1 level, below the main adit level. The leader looked most encouraging, but nothing of value was met with. A rise was constructed on a leader carrying payable ore, and when completed gave increased facilities for working the block of ground, from which 23 tons was treated, for a value of £106. The ventilation was fair, and the mine in good order. A new drive was put in later in the year, with a view to opening up a block of ground which had not been previously prospected, and good progress is being made. An average of seven men were employed.

COROMANDEL.

Old Hauraki.—The company holding this mine have amalgamated with the new Bunker's Hill Company, and a start was made in October last to unwater the properties, Mr. A. Jamieson, who for many years had control of the Old Hauraki Mine, under Captain Hodge's supervision, being intrusted with the management. The unwatering was accomplished towards the end of the year, and the levels down to No. 5 (400 ft.) were cleaned up. The new company propose carrying on vigorous prospecting operations at the lower levels, especially in the Iona section, north-east of the Hauraki shaft. It is believed that the reefs below 175 ft. level are intact, and it is proposed to connect with the 400 ft. level, Hauraki section. The Bunker's Hill and Palmerston sections will be prospected from the Hauraki low levels, and the reefs thoroughly tested, which, in my opinion, is the proper course to adopt. In the meantime the company intend to work some small blocks of ore in the upper levels, in the vicinity of Legs reef, from which splendid returns were obtained, to the extent of £250,000. Unfortunately this ore-body lost its values at the lower levels and broke up into several poor veins. For the year, 10 tons of ore was treated, for a yield of 66 oz., valued at £182 9s. An average of eighteen men were employed.

Old Kapanga Mine.—This is the oldest mine in the district, and has given employment to a considerable number of men for many years. The shaft has attained a depth of 1,000 ft., and some rich ore has been found. Diamond drills were used to test the reefs at a depth of 1,200 ft., and the cores are said to have given good results at that depth. The old company having abandoned the property, a new company was formed, and the mine unwatered to the 300 ft. level, when a large influx of water made it necessary to discontinue operations. At present the work is done by tributers, who are in the upper levels. 50 tons of ore was treated, for a yield of 100 oz., valued at £300. An average of seven men were employed.

Golden Pah Mine.—Tributers only are working on this property, but unfortunately they have not encountered ore of a payable character. The company still hold the ground, but, judging from appearances, they do not intend working it at present. The pumping and winding machinery has been sold, and removed to another mine in the district. Two men were employed during the year.

Success Mine.—Some years ago Mr. James, present owner, opened up the mine, and got very encouraging results from a leader on the western side of the Tokatea Range; then, under Captain Hodge's supervision, a great amount of prospecting was done, but without meeting with good prospects. The property has been returned to Mr. James, who has employed two men in the upper levels prospecting in the vicinity of the golden leader, from which rich gold was obtained by him. So far, nothing of importance has been discovered.

Hauraki Freeholds.—During the year twelve men were employed in the surface blocks on tribute. Towards the end of the year the company started to unwater the shaft mine-workings, and at first good progress was made. Latterly, however, the work has been greatly hindered by a series of accidents to the machinery, until the funds grew so low that work had to be abandoned, allowing the water to rise again in the shaft. The drainage of the Old Hauraki and associated mines may materially help the Hauraki Freeholds Company to drain their property.

Monte Christo Claim.—This claim is owned and worked by Mr. Magnus Kemner. The property is situated on the eastern side of the Tokatea Range, adjacent to the Royal Oak Mine. The work carried on for the year has chiefly consisted of extending the low level to cut the Day Dawn reef, which was afterwards found to contain low-grade ore. Mr. Kemner works alone in the mine, consequently slow progress is made, but he receives prospecting aid from the Mines Department. Several small parties of men have sections of the claim on tribute, but nothing of consequence has been found.

Royal Oak Mine.—Sixteen men, principally on tribute, have been at work in the mine and on the old tip-heads, from which 54 tons of ore was treated, for a yield of 1,028 oz., valued at £2,567. I am of opinion that mining companies should be required to develop their properties, instead of, as in this instance, depending on the royalty reaped from tributers. This company holds a great advantage over others in the respect that the mine is unwatered free, but no development-work has been done for some time past, and one can hardly say that the course adopted by the company is mining, or in the interests of mining.

Four-in-Hand Mine.—Four men have been employed on the eastern section of the property. A considerable amount of work has been done in opening up the mine. The reef has been cut and worked on in rising, sinking, and stoping in the several levels opened. Work has been confined to No. 4 level, from which 11 cwt. of specimen stone was treated, for a value of £368 16s. 6d.

South Kapanga Mine.—This mine is situated on a portion of the Scotty's Claim. An adit was driven some distance before intersecting the Scotty reef. Near the point of intersection and on the surface outcrop of the reef rich specimen stone was obtained by prospectors in the early days of the field; and later, from the same reef, at a depth of 300 ft. in the Scotty's shaft, under Captain Hodge's supervision, several thousands of pounds' worth of gold was won. It is unfortunate for the company that the reef has not been found to carry good ore, and, although some hundreds of feet have been driven on the reef, nothing of good value has been discovered. The mine was inspected on several occasions, and found in good order.