

from the adit to the old Waitekauri battery, which has been removed, and forty new stamps are in course of erection. A tramway is being constructed from this mine to the battery. The Golden Cross section is now so well opened up that it will take several years' work to exhaust the quartz from the upper workings.

The Waitekauri Extended Company are also carrying on extensive prospecting works, and have opened several reefs to the northward of the line of the Golden Cross reef. A thirty-stamp battery is to be erected.

Other companies are working, and the prospects from the reef are very encouraging. Large areas of ground are taken up in this locality.

Waitekauri.—In the Jubilee Syndicates Mine work is going on driving a low-level tunnel, and also on a reef near their battery, which at present consists of ten stamps. Cyanide treatment is to be added, and when complete, crushing will be commenced.

Many other companies are engaged in prospecting, and reefs are being discovered. The whole of the ground extending towards Komata and Owharoa has been taken up for mining purposes.

Komata.—The Komata Reefs Company have done a great amount of work. Several reefs of large size have been cut, and the quartz gives good assays. A twenty-stamp mill, to be driven by water-power, is being erected on the Komata Creek.

There are several other companies engaged in this district, and the results so far show that large bodies of quartz of payable grade have been discovered. The land about this place and towards Maratoto has all been taken up, chiefly in large areas.

Wharekeraupunga (or Parakawai district).—Considerable areas have been taken up here and towards Whangamata; but very little prospecting has yet been done. There is a likelihood of English capital being introduced here.

Waihi.—The Waihi Company have had another successful year. Very extensive operations are being conducted in developing the Martha reef. The main shaft has been sunk to a depth of 330ft., and pumping machinery sufficient to cope with the water is being erected. A tramway about seven miles long is being constructed to convey the quartz to the machine-site on the Ohinemuri River, near Thorp's Hill, and a new battery of 100 stampers is to be erected there. This will be driven by water-power from the Ohinemuri River, where a fall of 50ft. can be obtained, and also from the Waitekauri and Mangakara Streams, where the fall will be from 200ft. to 300ft. Sufficient power will be available to drive the mill throughout the year.

The Union Waihi Company, who now hold a portion of the land formerly held by the Waihi Company, are engaged in sinking a shaft and driving an adit-level for the purpose of working the Union and Amaranth reefs. The shaft is already 153ft. in depth.

The Waihi-Silverton Company have erected a battery of forty stamps, and have got the mine well opened up from their shaft. The assays from the quartz, which are taken systematically daily, show that the ore is of a valuable character, and a large addition to the yield from Waihi district may be anticipated from this mine.

The Grand Junction Company have sunk a shaft at the eastern end of the Waihi Mine, and another at the western end, but the difficulties attendant on a heavy flow of water in the formation have caused progress to be much slower than was anticipated, and a sufficient depth has not yet been attained to prospect on the run of the Martha reef. The Waihi South, Waihi Consols, and Queen of Waihi Companies have also sunk shafts, but a sufficient depth has not been reached to pierce through the rhyolite and prospect for the reefs. The Favona, another mine in the locality of the Silverton, has discovered a reef of quartz of great thickness, and is carrying on works to open up and test its value. The Brilliant and the Favona have been disposed of to an English company. Large areas have been taken up from Waihi towards the East Coast, and in a northerly direction in the bush, and also towards Mataura.

PIAKO COUNTY.

Large areas have been taken up in the Tui Creek, Te Aroha, and Waiorongomai districts. The Te Aroha Syndicate have possession of The New Find, Premier, and other old mines at Waiorongomai, and are prosecuting exploration works to prospect the reefs, and are taking steps to test large quantities of the quartz.

TAURANGA COUNTY.

Since the extension of the goldfields boundary to the southward, prospecting has been carried on in the Tauranga and Te Puke districts. Gold has been discovered in several places, and on Fleming's freehold a considerable amount of work has been done.

The number of special claims of the maximum area of 100 acres shows that much larger areas than were previously taken up are now eagerly sought after. It is not to be expected that the total number of these areas will be mined upon, as too many of them have been marked out haphazard, without regard to line of reef or favourable localities. Mining companies have been formed to work ground so situated that the ultimate probability of even discovering reefs is very remote. There is, however, one favourable feature in connection with the floating of many local companies, inasmuch as sums from £200 to £2,000 have been obtained from the sale of promoters' shares, which will be devoted towards working the ground before any of the company's capital is called up. This method is an improvement on that which obtained in the past, when the whole of the money from shares sold by the promoters was pocketed by those who first marked out and occupied the ground.

In many cases mines have been disposed of to English companies, and in others negotiations for the sale are pending. The following list will show the English companies who have already become proprietors of mines in this district: The Hauraki, Scotty's Hauraki, Royal Oak of Tokatea, The Tokatea of Hauraki, New Hauraki Gold Properties, Kathleen Gold-mine, Success Gold-mine, Triumph, Hauraki East, Kapanga, Preece's Point, Kathleen, Crown, Blagrove's Freehold, &c., at Coromandel; Tararu Mines, Alburnia, Moanataiari, Thames-Hauraki Goldfields, and Fame and