

*Puriri District.*—The Bewick-Moreing Syndicate has been prospecting the Hit-or-Miss property, and good prospects have been met with.

The Apakura Syndicate has been prospecting the Apakura and Fair Alice Mines, but has not met with much success.

The Dover Castle Company is prospecting its property. Two reefs were discovered, and are now being opened up. The prospects are good.

*Omahu District.*—This is a new district. A great number of claims have been taken up, and the owners are carrying on prospecting operations. Several reefs carrying gold have been discovered, but work has not far enough advanced yet to say whether or not they are payable.

*Kirikiri District.*—Work at Fleming's (the Horse-shoe, Filly, and Chester special claims) has been carried on by the New Zealand Exploration Company (Limited). Good prospects were met with at first, but the reef was lost, and the company gave up the option. Since then the men engaged by Mr. Fleming have put in a cross-cut, and discovered the reef a few feet away. Rich specimens were taken out, and the reef is stronger than ever. This property is well worth developing. Several other claims have been taken up, and prospecting is going on.

*Pakirarahi and Upper Tairua.*—Several claims have been granted in this locality, and a great many more applied for, but the difficulty with the Kauri Timber Company has prevented the majority being granted. Prospecting work has been going on with success enough to warrant the expenditure of capital to open up the different lodes discovered.

*Kaieranga District.*—Large lodes have been found in this locality, and several claims applied for. This district is worth prospecting.

*Ohui District.*—Work has been going on in several of the claims in this district, but nothing payable has been unearthed. The Maori Dream property has been disposed of to an English company, which is prospecting the ground thoroughly.

#### OHINEMURI COUNTY.

Gold-mining in the Ohinemuri County has made great strides during the preceding twelve months, and unquestionably the county has a great future before it as a gold-producing district. The major part of the county has already been pegged out, and there are now existing 622 special claims and licensed holdings, of a total acreage of 44,895 acres 2 roods 38 perches. The population has gone on steadily increasing, and there are now large towns at Waihi, Waitekauri, and Karangahake, and in addition I have had to give instructions to the Government surveyor to have townships laid off without delay at Waikino, Komata, and Maratoto. During the year 1936 residence sites were applied for, and in many cases very good and substantial houses have been built on them.

The Waihi, Crown, Woodstock, Waitekauri, and Talisman Mines have sustained their great reputations as gold-producers, whilst the Silverton, although slightly disappointing, promises to come back, when properly developed, to the opinion previously formed of it. In addition to the above-mentioned companies, which are now in full going order, the following new batteries are in course of construction, and should considerably add to the output of gold for this and the following years: Waihi Company, 100 head of stamps, at Waikino; the Komata Reefs, Waitekauri Extended, and Royal Standard, 40 head of stamps each; the Alpha and Jubilee, 20 head of stamps each; besides which the Hikutaia Syndicate, in the Maratoto District, proposes to erect a 100-head battery in the spring.

From the experiments lately conducted in the Crown Mines battery with a wet-crushing process (particulars of which are not yet to hand) it is believed a new era will be started in the milling process. The experiments have been so successful that the present Crown battery is being converted to meet its requirements. The advantages attaching themselves to this system are so important that it is sincerely to be hoped that it will be the success claimed. It will completely do away with the "dust" evil, which mine-managers have been so much exercised over, and which has been the cause of so many deaths. This alone stamps the process as a blessing; but it will also to a very great extent assist in preserving the timber, which will all be required for *bona fide* mining operations, instead of being ruthlessly cut and burnt in the kilns. The ore will not require roasting in the kiln before going through the mill, thus saving a large amount of money, for the cost of cutting, splitting, &c., and conveying to battery has been a costly matter. But the greatest advantage it claims is that, whilst by the dry-crushing 1 ton of ore per diem can be crushed by each stamp, by the new process double the result can be obtained. Needless to say the practical solution of the process is anxiously awaited, but it is feared that quartz containing fine gold such as that at Waihi Mine cannot be treated with water, because when crushed there is too much clayey substance in the ore.

*Maratoto.*—A very large amount of prospecting and development works has been done during the preceding twelve months. The Hikutaia Syndicate has acquired three special claims and two licensed holdings, and has already driven 1,300 ft. in the main reef, with such good results that it contemplates erecting 100-head of stamps and a complete cyanide plant in the spring. At present a large low-level prospecting tunnel is being put in, which will develop all the properties belonging to the syndicate.

*Karangahake.*—The Crown mine has made great progress, and the workings are looking particularly well. This company has under order a large amount of new machinery, including a compressor of 180 horse-power, which will allow the shaft to be put down to the 500 ft. level below the river-bed. This will enable the mine to be thoroughly opened up. Two large chambers have been excavated, one on each side of river, to accommodate the new machinery. To drive this a water-race 110 chains in length down the Waitawheta River is being constructed. The Earl of Glasgow Special Claim has also been acquired, and as the same reefs traverse both properties, it can be worked better and cheaper. This mine has just paid a dividend.

The Woodstock Gold-mining Company has started operations with its new battery of forty heads. The mine itself is well opened up and thoroughly developed, and promises to be as good a