

the erection of two large slime-collectors 32 ft. in diameter by 14 ft. in depth. An air-compressor pressure-tank and filter-press were also added to the plant so as to adapt it to wet-crushing. The process adopted is the same as that in use in the wet-crushing plant at the Victoria mill, Waikino, the sands and slimes being separated, and the latter dealt with by means of a filter-press. The mill was started on the 25th September last, working with two shifts for a time, and then increased to three shifts per day. Up to the 31st December 4,199 tons of ore was treated for 3,385 oz. of bullion; value, £4,558 3s.

*Waihi Grand Junction.*—This company had a large amount of water to contend with in the Junction section, which had the effect of considerably increasing the cost and retarding the work. The new pumping plant was started early in April, and the pumping-shaft sunk to the 500 ft. level by the end of the year, when repairing the level and development-work were at once proceeded with. In the Waihi West section the C shaft has been sunk 142 ft., making the total depth of this shaft 210 ft., and it is to be sunk to a depth of from 400 ft. to 500 ft., "or until favourable country is met with," when a level is to be driven from the shaft to intersect the reef and thereby prove its value in this section of the property. An average of fifty men have been employed. No returns.

*Waihi Extended.*—The operations in this company's mine have been principally directed to the sinking of a main shaft, the erection of machinery and poppet-head. The shaft was sunk by the aid of the windlass and bucket to a depth of 80 ft., when the water was too much to contend with by those means and machinery was erected. Work was then resumed, and a depth of 200 ft. attained by the end of the year, but the company intends to sink a further distance of 120 ft. before opening out for a level and driving to intersect the reefs. The machinery consists of a Tangye coupled winding-engine (mounted on a wrought-iron frame), with a pair of 8 in. cylinders and 14 in. stroke, and is capable of winding a load—exclusive of weight of cage—of 27 cwt. at a speed of 300 ft. per minute. The boiler is also a Tangye 14 horse power nominal or 30 horse power actual, made of steel with thirty 3 in. tubes, and to carry 100 lb. working steam-pressure. Ten men have been employed. No returns.

*Waihi Consols.*—This company's property was protected for a time, work being resumed in the month of September. The work has been mostly confined to driving a prospecting surface-drive on the western end of the property, which has attained a distance of 200 ft. without any reefs, &c., being intersected, and the intention is to drive it to the boundary, a further distance of 200 ft. A bore has also been put down on the flat near the southern boundary; this has reached a depth of 160 ft., but will have to go down 600 ft. or 700 ft. before a change (or the gold-bearing country) can reasonably be expected to be found. Six men are employed. No returns.

*Waihi South.*—Operations in this mine for a time were confined to extending two prospecting crosscuts in a north-easterly and south-westerly direction from the bottom of the shaft, at a depth of 270 ft., with the expectation of intersecting one of the Waihi Company's well-known lodes, when a large inflow of water was cut in the north-east crosscut. This was more than their pump and plant could contend with, and in consequence work was stopped, and the property protected, pending arrangements being made to raise capital to erect suitable machinery to cope with the water. During the time the work was carried on twelve men were employed. No returns.

*Waihi Consolidated.*—Only a limited amount of work has been done on this ground, the work being directed to prospecting the property by means of boring. Boreholes have been put down in several places, with a view to intersecting a reef and ascertaining the class of country, also the most suitable place to sink a shaft to develop the ground; but so far no important discoveries have been made. From three to five men have been employed. No returns.

*Waihi Gladstone.*—Operations in this mine have been confined to the development of the main reef in the No. 3 level, which varies in size from 4 ft. to 6 ft., its strike being north and south. It has been driven on at this level for 60 ft., and is said to be of a payable character so far as exploited. In the Nos. 1 and 2 levels the reef has been opened up to a considerable extent. There are several hundred tons of quartz stacked on the surface and intended for treatment, but so far no large quantity has yet been put through a mill. Six men are employed.

Several claims have lately been taken up in the neighbourhood of Waihi, and prospecting operations are also being carried on in the Federal, Pride of Waihi, Waihi Monument, and Prince of Waihi Claims, from two to four men being employed on each. So far no important discovery has been reported.

*Waihi Beach United Claim.*—Prospecting operations have been carried on to some extent with from four to six men at the surface-levels, although no work of what may be termed a permanent character has been undertaken. I am informed sufficient capital has been raised to enable the owners to more systematically develop the property, and it has been decided to sink a shaft and prove the value of the various reefs at a depth.

#### WHAREKIRAUPUNGA.

A little prospecting has been carried on in this locality, but no important discoveries have yet been reported.

*Royal Standard.*—There has been very little work done in this mine for some time past; it is under protection pending the owner (Captain Hodge) raising sufficient capital in England to enable him to more systematically develop the mine, which he is sanguine will yet prove to be a valuable property.

#### WAIORONGOMAI.

*Empire and New Mine.*—This property has been steadily worked by the owner (Mr. E. H. Hardy), who is of opinion that when the mine is opened up it will again become one of the leading gold-producing mines in the district. The present operations are being directed to driving and stopping on the reef in the Empire section of the property, the results being highly