

In the Hauraki Mining District, it is to be noted that extensive additions have been made to the plant of the Waihi Gold-mining Company, by which the crushing-power of the mills has been increased to 330 stamps. The dry-crushing process formerly adopted by this company has now given place to wet crushing, with results satisfactory to the owners and highly beneficial to the health of the men employed in the batteries. It may be remarked that the process of dry crushing has disappeared altogether from battery practice in New Zealand. Extensive bodies of ore have been proved at the Waihi Gold-mining Company's mines, which will afford a large output for many years to come, and work is now being undertaken for further development of the property at an increased depth.

None of the mines at Waihi, other than those owned by the Waihi Gold-mining Company, have yet reached a productive stage, but appearances favour the opinion that more determined efforts will be made to prove the continuation of the reef-system beyond the boundaries of the Waihi Gold-mining Company's holding.

The New Zealand Crown Mines at Karangahake rank second in importance, and satisfactory results were obtained for the year. Development-work has been largely in evidence at the neighbouring properties owned by the Talisman Consolidated (Limited) and the Woodstock Gold-mining Company. The latter company's operations have, however, been intermittent, and boring operations have been undertaken to further prove the property.

At Waitekauri results have been disappointing, owing to large bodies of calcite in the reefs, in some instances practically displacing the quartz.

Payable returns have been obtained from the Komata Reefs and from the Tairua Broken Hills Mine. Prospecting-work at Neavesville has also turned out well, and the mine is to be developed and a battery erected. At Waiorongomai satisfactory returns were obtained, and extensions to battery plant are under consideration.

Nothing new in the shape of developments can be reported at the Lower Thames. Boring operations by the Victoria Gold-mining Company have been suspended, but a public movement is now on foot to prove by a series of bores the existence or otherwise of gold-bearing reefs at a depth beyond that which has already been reached. The Government has agreed to contribute towards the cost of the undertaking, which is one of vital importance to the district.

The question of further ore-bodies existing at Thames is one which should be definitely settled, and within recent years the enlargement and deepening of the Queen of Beauty shaft was undertaken by the Thames-Hauraki Goldfields (Limited) with the object of exploring the ground at depth. In consideration of the company undertaking to sink this shaft to a depth of 2,000 ft. the Government paid a substantial subsidy towards the cost of a very powerful pumping plant, which was intended eventually to drain the other mines in the locality. Owing to financial difficulties the company was unable to continue its operations, and all work was stopped. To satisfy the demands of creditors the properties of the company were recently put up to auction by order of the Court, and purchased by the Government to prevent the machinery being sold piecemeal, and so retarding the development of deep-level mining, and probably causing its abandonment for many years to come. The shaft and plant are now available for use on such terms and conditions as may be considered most desirable to further the objects for which they were intended.

At Coromandel an impetus has been given to gold-mining by the discovery of highly payable ore at the Hauraki and Bunker's Hill Mines. Some of the mines (on which large sums of money have been spent) have closed down, but operations are being steadily prosecuted at the Royal Oak Mine and at several small properties adjacent to the town. It is to be regretted that the value of the ore at the Kauri Freehold Gold Estates Company's Mines at Opitonui, and also at the Mariposa and Kapai-Vermont joint properties at Kuaotunu, is too poor to admit of working otherwise than at a loss, and these mines have had to close down for the present. The Waitaia Mine, in the