

The value of gold won in the Hauraki Block during the year was £4,989 1s. 10d., and fifty persons were employed.

Bullion to the value of £701 4s. 8d. was obtained at the small tailings treatment plant of Messrs. Shepherd and Patterson near the beach. This plant gives employment to three persons, and affords a good illustration of what can be done with old tailings without a very great capital outlay.

In the Tokatea portion of the Coromandel locality, mining has provided employment for eighty people, and bullion has been won to the value of £9,967 1s. 11d. Of these totals, the Royal Oak Mine is responsible for the employment of forty-six persons, and a bullion yield of £9,110 1s. 7d. in value. It will thus be seen that during last year the production of other small mines was very limited.

Mining in the neighbourhood of Kennedy Bay has been carried on at the Four-in-hand Mine and the Old Whangapoua and Exact Claims, fourteen persons being employed and bullion to the value of £1,220 15s. 3d. obtained. At the New Four-in-hand Mine, a new low-level tunnel is being driven from the Waikoromiko Creek to cut the Tainui and Four-in-hand reefs considerably below the present and former workings. The country-rock through which this tunnel is being driven is of a somewhat different character to the overlying andesite common to the district. I therefore submitted a sample to the Colonial Analyst for his analysis. This is as follows:—

	Per Cent.
Silica .. .. .	56·3
Alumina .. .. .	20·4
Calcium-carbonate .. .. .	8·2
Magnesia .. .. .	2·4
Alkalies .. .. .	4·4
Iron-sulphide (iron-pyrites) .. .. .	6·0
Moisture .. .. .	2·3
	100·0

If it is found that the reefs live down into this lower rock and maintain their values (the average for last year from higher levels being £3 18s. 2d. per ton), the company have a very good property. A much lower level opening than the present one is practicable from the valley of Waikoromiko Creek, and should the size and quality of the reefs continue satisfactory, a very considerable amount of ore can be won without the necessity of hoisting or pumping appliances.

At Cabbage Bay, a small leader has been worked on at the White Star Claim by two men.

The principal mining operations in the neighbourhood of Kuaotunu are being carried on at the Waitaia Mine, the returns for 1904 showing an increase in the value of bullion produced of £1,526 8s. 6d. as compared with the production of the previous year. During the period under review the output of milling quartz was 1,119 tons, which gave an average value of £5 8s. 3·4d. per ton. Most of the stone is being obtained from leaders. Development-work for the purpose of opening up the mine at a lower level will have to be shortly undertaken.

A small amount of work has been done on other properties in the locality, the most productive of which was at the Otama Mine. From this property gold to the value of £410 12s. 9d. was obtained, the average being equal to £3 14s. 11·8d. per ton of stone treated.

At Gumtown, two small mines—the Kopowai and the Big Beetle—have been worked to some extent during the year for a combined total output of 688 tons of milled quartz, value £1,803 15s. 4d., equal to a general average of £2 12s. 6·7d. per ton.

On the Great Barrier Island, work at the Barrier Reefs was confined to the treatment of tailings, resulting in a bullion value of £2,380 18s. 3d., two men being employed. At the Sunbeam Mine, development-work is in progress. A small battery plant for the treatment of the ore is also in course of erection.

The reports of Mr. Coutts, Inspector of Mines, Thames, and Mr. Warden Bush deal very fully with gold-mining on the Hauraki Peninsula, within the boundaries of which the industry is (with slight exceptions) confined so far as the North Island is concerned.

#### MIDDLE ISLAND.

There is practically nothing of importance to report as regards quartz-mining in the Marlborough Province. Company reconstruction has been effected for the working of the Jubilee Mine at Top Valley, near Blenheim, and work for the development of the property at a lower level put in hand. The proprietary is now known as the Wairau Gold-mining Company.

Some prospecting on behalf of a Wellington syndicate was also undertaken in another part of the district. It is understood that capital will be forthcoming if the results of prospecting operations are sufficiently promising.

At Taitapu (West Wanganui) the Golden Ridge (Taitapu Gold Estates) Mine had a much smaller tonnage output than that of the previous year. The average value of the ore treated was £4 15s. per ton. The other mine in this locality, the Golden Blocks, is returned as showing an increase in the amount of gold obtained in comparison with the yield of the previous year, the value per ton working out at £3 12s. 8½d., or an advanced value of 4s. 4½d. per ton milled. The total value of gold obtained from the two properties is given as £11,833 14s. 2d., and 3,057 tons of quartz was crushed.

Only one small mine in the vicinity of Westport produced gold during the year—viz., the Britannia Mine, near Waimangaroa. The quantity of stone treated was 765½ tons, from which a gold value of £2,506 15s. 10d. was obtained. Average value, £3 5s. 6d. per ton; dividends for the year, £333 6s. 8d. The Red Queen Mine, Mokihinui, has been let on tribute, the tributers being engaged on development-works during the year.