

*Golden Belt Gold-mining Company, Tairua.*—Work in this mine has been confined chiefly to prospecting. A short block of ore which is expected to be payable is now being stoped above No. 1 level. There are four men employed.

*Golden Hills, Tairua* (Mr. J. M. Agnew, owner).—Work has been confined to stoping on the main reef above No. 1 level. The 440 tons of ore treated produced gold valued at £1,241 0s. 9d.

PIAKO COUNTY.

*Bendigo Gold-mining Company, Waiorongomai.*—Five men are employed testing various sections of the Bendigo lode, but so far nothing payable has been discovered.

*Hardy's Mine, Waiorongomai.*—No work has been done in this mine during the year, but it is expected that capital will shortly be available to develop the low level.

COROMANDEL COUNTY.

*Old Hauraki Gold-mining Company, Coromandel.*—This mine was closed down for several years. A new company was recently formed, and sufficient capital is now available to test the reef-system at a greater depth. All the machinery has been overhauled, and a start made to unwater the Old Hauraki shaft. It has not yet been decided whether this company will deepen the old shaft or sink a prospecting-shaft from the floor of the 400 ft. level, where rich specimen stone was obtained.

*Marshal Fock Claim.*—A small syndicate has been formed to test what is known as the Mount Welcome lode by driving north and south upon it from the low level.

There are also a number of claims held and being worked, but none call for special mention.

TAURANGA COUNTY.

*Muir's Gold Reefs, Te Puke.*—During the year work has been confined to stoping above No. 1 level, widening out and timbering at the low level, and rising to connect with the surface for filling purposes. Practically all the ore developed at No. 1 level has been stoped out. At the low level a leading stopc has been taken along for 200 ft., and at the intermediate level 80 ft. has been driven on ore expected to contain payable values. Crushing commenced early in May, and from 4,100 tons of ore treated gold valued at £17,703 7s. 6d. was obtained. Unfortunately, early in January this year the mill was burnt down. It is intended, however, to replace it with a 20-head stamp mill purchased from the Barrier Reefs Gold-mining Company, and this plant is now being removed to Te Puke.

Accidents.

No fatal accidents occurred during the year in the metal-mines under my supervision. Two serious accidents were reported, and they are briefly described hereunder:—

5th July: Charles A. Dickson and his mate were employed draining a surface tunnel at the Waihi Grand Junction for filling. Two sets had been put in at the mouth of the tunnel, which was only 20 ft. from the surface. On account of the country being apparently firm, side slabs were not used. At the time of the accident Dickson was filling a truck at the mouth of the tunnel, when a large block of mullock came away from the side between the sets and struck him on the hip. No bones were broken, but the hip was badly bruised.

1st September: Dunlop and his mate R. Preece had been engaged prospecting for several weeks, and, finding some good stone on an old tip, decided to investigate as to where it came from. They therefore entered an old drive of the Magnet Extended, Thames, where there had been no work done for over twenty-five years, and in which for over 100 ft. the water had been dammed back to a depth of 2 ft. Finding the leader, Dunlop began picking some stone into a bag held by his mate. He had only struck a few blows when a large flake came away and struck him on the back and shoulder, thereby dislocating his collar-bone and severely bruising his back.

NORTH AUCKLAND INSPECTION DISTRICT (Mr. BOYD BENNIE, Inspector of Mines).

*New Zealand Quicksilver Mines (Limited), Puhipuhi.*—During the year work at the mine consisted of mining and treating the ore previously developed. For that period 650 tons of ore was treated for a return of £2,793 15s., the mercury being sold at 5s. per pound at Auckland. It is estimated there are about 1,000 tons of ore in sight ready for mining, the value of which is a little less than the ore previously mined. With careful treatment this ore may give a little profit over working-expenses, as with the present plant it is stated only 50 per cent. of the values are saved. The mine was inspected several times during the year, and I found that mining was carried on with great care and that timber-supplies were adequate for present requirements. Supplies of mining-timber, however, in the near future will be a real difficulty, as a settler in the district has been allowed to remove standing dead kauri, totara, and rimu timber for milling purposes in nowise connected with mining or his own requirements.

*Joffre Claim* (Messrs. Collins Bros., owners).—I visited the mine in February and April, when the owners were driving an adit level with a view to intersecting an ore deposit which was seen outcropping some little distance to the north-east. In April the ore-body had been cut into, but was not a well-defined deposit of cinnabar. Since that visit the owners have left the mine to seek employment elsewhere and to give them an opportunity of raising capital for the future development of their claim.

*McLeod's Claim.*—This mine has apparently been closed down during the whole of the year.

Several claims have been granted on the mining field, but at present the New Zealand Quicksilver-mining Company is the only mining company doing any work.