

*Quicksilver-mining.*

*New Zealand Quicksilver-mines, Puhipuhi.*—No work has been done in this mine during the year.

*Mount Mitchell Mercury-mine, Whangarei.*—Operations during the year have been confined to prospecting. A surface trench, 400 ft. long to a depth of 4 ft., has been cut through this deposit and disclosed five different ore-shoots; from picked samples the highest value obtained was 5.8 per cent. mercury. A few pounds of mercury was produced by retorting for a special purpose. The Dominion Analyst reported this mercury to be free from impurities and well suited for dental purposes.

*Rising Sun, Puhipuhi.*—No work has been done in this mine during the year.

*Accidents.*

## FATAL.

I am pleased to report that no fatal accident has occurred in the district under my supervision during the year.

## SERIOUS.

*Waihi Mine.*—12th January, 1923: A miner named David McClure received serious injuries to his spine by falling down a pass. 28th June, 1923: A serious blasting accident occurred in the drive on the Martha lode above No. 9 level, whereby a miner named F. G. McLean lost the sight of both eyes.

*Waihi Grand Junction Mine.*—10th January, 1923: A serious accident occurred in the Waihi Grand Junction Company's battery to a man named Edward Pendergrast, who, whilst engaged oiling the bearings of a counter-shaft, got caught in the belting and, besides other injuries, had a portion of his finger torn off. 10th March, 1923: James Dunlop, working in a stope, received serious injuries to his right knee and severe cuts on both legs, head, and body, due to a fall of calcite.

*Oil-wells.*

*Taranaki Oil-wells.*—No work has been done during the year; oil produced was 120 barrels.

*Paritutu Oil Company (Limited).*—The depth of the well is approximately 6,000 ft. The Paritutu Company has withdrawn most of the casing below the 2,000 ft. level, and it is probable, therefore, that the well below the 2,000 ft. level has caved in. This well has been running fairly consistently during the year, but no record has been kept of the exact quantity produced; it is estimated, however, that the quantity which flowed from the well during the year would not be less than 36 barrels.

*Waipatiki Wells.*—No drilling has been done in this well during the year, and all efforts to free the obstruction failed.

## WEST COAST INSPECTION DISTRICT (Mr. J. F. DOWNEY, Inspector of Mines).

*Quartz-mining.*

## MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT.

*Dominion Consolidated Mining and Development Company (Limited).*—This company has been idle throughout the year.

## NELSON AND LYELL DISTRICTS.

No quartz-mining was done in these districts for the year.

## REEFTON DISTRICT.

*Blackwater Mine.*—During the year the average number of men employed amounted to 141. The development-work carried out consisted of 1,665½ ft. of driving, rising, and winzing, of which 921½ ft. was on reef averaging 14.28 dwt. over a width of 30½ in. The details of the work are as follows: Low level, extended branch drive, 86½ ft.; No. 5 level extended 41½ ft., of which 33 ft. were on reef; No. 6 level south extended 26 ft., off reef; No. 7 level north, 30½ ft., off reef; No. 7 level south, 166 ft., off reef; No. 7 level rise at 1,515 ft. south, 40½ ft., off reef; No. 8 level north, 180½ ft., of which 164½ ft. were on reef; No. 9 level north, 159½ ft., of which 139½ ft. were on reef; No. 9 level, rise at 520 ft. south, 19½ ft., on reef; No. 9 level north, rise at 20 ft. north, 79 ft., of which 48 ft. were on reef; No. 9 level, rise at 820 ft. north, 84 ft., of which 28½ ft. were on reef; No. 9 level, winze at 200 ft. north, 106½ ft., on reef; No. 10 level north, 276½ ft., of which 164½ ft. were on reef; No. 10 level north (south branch), 49½ ft., 39½ ft. on reef; No. 10 level north (intermediate from rise 220 ft. north), 28 ft., on reef; No. 10 level south, 9 ft., off reef; No. 10 level, rise at 200 ft. north, 31½ ft., on reef; No. 10 level, rise at 220 ft. north, 49 ft., on reef. Winzes were also sunk from low level and No. 8 level, at 1,380 ft. south in the former and 850 ft. north in the latter, to 109½ ft. and 29 ft. respectively, all of which was on reef. Some 63½ ft. of crosscutting was also done. For the year, 39,730 tons of quartz were crushed, being approximately the same quantity as during 1922. The quantity of gold won amounted to 19,295 oz. 16 dwt., which was 182 oz. less than during the previous year; but the amount realized for it, £75,438 0s. 6d., shows a slight increase on the 1922 figures. Shortage of suitable labour greatly handicapped progress.

*North Blackwater Mine.*—No active mining-work was done on this claim during the year, the company not having completed the rearrangement of its financial affairs.

*Murray Creek Mine.*—This mine has also been idle the whole year, but funds have been raised to give it another trial, and a resumption of work is expected at the New Year.

*New Big River Mine.*—An average of thirty-nine men were employed in mine and treatment plant. 4,324 tons of quartz were crushed, an increase of 358 tons on last year. The recovery was 3,804 oz. of gold, valued at £15,609 7s. 10d., a decrease in quantity and value respectively of 439 oz. and £2,780. The stone put through was thus evidently of lower grade than previously. The main development during the year was in the extension of the new level, No. 12, a farther 878 ft., making 1,028 ft. in all. At 866 ft. from the shaft the reef was entered, and was driven on for 140 ft.; it was, however, rather small and broken, but should improve in size a little farther ahead.

*New Keep-it-Dark Mine.*—A tribute party has worked continuously at this mine throughout the year, taking out a block of quartz left over No. 1 level. Sixteen men were employed. Some 2,549 tons of quartz was treated, which yielded 1,306 oz. 17 dwt. gold, valued at £5,068. The party, I understand, has done fairly well out of its tribute, but the amount of stone left is strictly limited, and work cannot be continued for more than a few months longer.

*North Big River Mine.*—A considerable amount of work in the way of winzing, rising, driving, and crosscutting was carried out with a view to tracing downwards a small reef said to carry gold in No. 1 intermediate level. So far, however, this reef has not been traced below the level mentioned.

*New Millerton Mine.*—This mine was idle during the early part of the year, but has since been worked in a small way with from four to six men. Stopping was carried out in Nos. 1 and 2 levels, and 285 tons of quartz were mined and treated for 89 oz. 13 dwt. gold, valued at £365 1s. 6d. No cyaniding was done, the sands being stacked for future treatment by this process.

*New Discovery Mine.*—This property was idle since the early part of the year, but preparations are now being made for a resumption of work.

*Ready Bullion Mine.*—This has been idle the entire year.