

QUICKSILVER AND SULPHUR MINES.

Mercury Mines (N.Z.), Ltd., Puhipuhi.—Some work was done by this company on its property (the New Zealand Quicksilver mine) by way of opening up and retimbering old levels. A crosscut was driven at right angles to the main adit for a distance of 25 ft. The plant erected in the previous year was given a number of trial runs and a total of 27 tons of ore, which yielded 563 lb. of quicksilver, valued at £132 4s. 5d., was treated.

No work of importance was done in any of the sulphur deposits in the district during the year.

PRODUCTION FROM OIL-WELLS.

Moturoa Oil Fields, Ltd.—The work carried out by this company consists mainly of repairs and maintenance in connection with the production of Nos. 1, 2, and 4 wells. No drilling was done. Nos. 1 and 4 wells, flowing under their own gas pressure, produced 18,288 and 49,373 imperial gallons of oil respectively, while from No. 2 well a total of 118,123 imperial gallons was obtained by bailing at intervals. The total value of the oil produced was £3,483 9s.

ACCIDENTS.

There were no fatalities in the district during the year. One serious non-fatal accident, however, occurred at the Martha Gold-mining Company's Waikino battery. The victim of this accident was Gilbert Jones, married. He fractured an ulnar and two metacarpal bones and also suffered a bruised abdomen. He was engaged restacking mild steel plates at the time of the occurrence, and after removing a number, the balance of the plates, about twenty, fell forward on to his arm and body, with the result stated. Another accident occurred at the Matatoki quarry. The victim was named M. Garaa. He was engaged barring down a loose stone, when his lever slipped and the stone rolled back on him. He suffered a compound fracture of the left thigh.

PROSPECTING.

Most of the effort in this direction was carried out under the Government's unemployed prospecting schemes at Thames and Coromandel. In the former locality an average of approximately 149 men was employed, and in the latter about 72 men. In the Thames area the subsidized men won 971 oz. 10 dwt. of gold, valued at £5,868 10s. 10d. This includes about £2,000 worth of gold which was obtained during the last quarter of the year by the Homan brothers, who operate on an area in close proximity to Tapu. In the Coromandel district the men working under the subsidized schemes won 329 oz. 12 dwt. of gold, valued at £1,783 17s. 9d.

BORING.

During the year 1935, boring operations were carried out in this district on the undermentioned areas:—

Hikutaiia.—Mining Trust and Finance completed one borehole to a depth of 901 ft. on the property of Tasman United Mines, Limited, at Hikutaiia. The work was carried out with the Mines Department's C. N. Sullivan Drill, using 2½ in. casing.

Maratoto.—The Department's C. N. Sullivan drill was also used during the year to put down one hole to a depth of 395 ft. on the property of the Ohinemuri Gold and Silver Mines, Limited, at Maratoto; 2½ in. casing was used.

Tiki Flat.—Three holes were put down at Tiki Flat, Block X, Coromandel Survey District, during the year by J. Burrows with his own machine. The boring was carried out on behalf of J. G. Neil; 6 in. casing was used with a 7 in. cutting-shoe.

Coromandel Harbour.—Alluvial Tin (Aust.), Limited, put down seven holes during the year on the Coromandel Harbour foreshore. The boring was carried out on behalf of Messrs. J. S. McLeod and S. J. Land; 6 in. casing was used with a 7½ in. cutting-shoe.

WEST COAST INSPECTION DISTRICT (G. W. LOWES, Inspector of Mines).

QUARTZ-MINING.

Marlborough County.

Smile of Fortune Mine, Wakamarina (Luigi Iada, manager).—Five men are employed by a syndicate on the top level of this mine, which was opened out a few years ago. The level was extended a short distance on hard, low grade ore. A winze, sunk on the lode below the level to a depth of 50 ft., was showing better prospects; 303 tons of ore was crushed, yielding 38 oz. 5 dwt. of gold, valued at £248 8s. 11d.

Buller County.

Britannia Mine.—W. McLellan, manager, and three men employed. A considerable amount of driving and crosscutting has been carried out with the object of locating further bodies of payable ore. Owing to the broken nature of the country enclosing the ore-bodies, the latter are shattered and displaced, consequently ore reserves are difficult to build up and the battery only works intermittently; 170 tons of ore was crushed during the year, for a yield of 86 oz. 3 dwt. of gold, of which 75 oz. 13 dwt. was obtained by amalgamation and 10 oz. 10 dwt. by cyanidation, the value of the whole recovery being £603 1s. The total value of gold recovered since the present company re-opened the mine amounts to £3,130 4s.

Inangahua County.

Blackwater Mine.—T. R. Hogg, manager, and two hundred and thirty-one men employed. During the period under review development footage amounted to 2,499½ ft., which is summarized as follows: Driving, 1,184 ft.; winzing, 456 ft.; rising, 197 ft.; crosscutting, 497½ ft.; shaft sinking and plat cutting, 165 ft. No. 10 level, south: This was extended a distance of 184½ ft. to 1,029½ ft., without disclosing anything of value. At this point a crosscut was put out east to explore the footwall country. At the end of the year this had been extended 363 ft. without locating anything of value. Whilst this drive is open it is the company's intention to endeavour to ascertain definitely if there is another body of ore in this locality. So far the appearances are not very encouraging. No. 11 level, branch drive at 1,660 ft. north: This drive opened 144½ ft. of reef, of which approximately half the distance exposed low-grade ore, the remainder being of payable grade. No. 12 level, north: This was extended 728½ ft., and reached the northern end of the ore-body. All but 30 ft. was on reef averaging 14.40 dwt. of gold over a width of 28.4 in., the length, width, and values exposed being very gratifying. As soon as the north shaft is again operating, this drive should be advanced about 170 ft., in country rock, in search of what is known as the Prohibition Block. It was not advisable to do this before as the distance to transport the mullock to the main shaft was too great. No. 13 level: As soon as it was possible to get the cages down to this level, the 60 ft. crosscut was extended from the shaft to the reef, and the drive south started to make connection with a winze already sunk from No. 12 level. In doing so, the 48½ ft. driven disclosed reef averaging 16.71 dwt. of gold over a width of 20 in. On the north side of the crosscut 3½ ft. driven exposed reef averaging 22.21 dwt. of gold over a width of 24 in. These figures augur well for the new level. Shaft sinking: During the year the North or Prohibition Shaft was deepened 150 ft. from a point 25 ft. below No. 12 level to a point 25 ft. below No. 13 level, this latter level being opened at 2,350 ft. from the surface. Ore reserves have been maintained up to the usual average, and stand at 93,253 tons, despite the increased tonnage mined and treated. Widths and values at a depth of 2,350 ft.