

than Gibbie. Gibbie is the best drawn character in the book—Gibbie so sensitively alive in public to her mistress' dignity, as Lady Margaret St. Albans, and so ready to scold that mistress in private for doing things which Gibbie considers unseemly to her age and to her position as the daughter of an earl and the widow of a baronet of ancient lineage. But the characters are all, almost without exception, drawn with a considerable amount of skill, and the authoress is to be congratulated on having advanced a good way in her art since writing her previous work, 'Iva Kildare.' The love story of a young girl twines itself, with pretty pathos, into the last weeks of Lady Margaret's life.

Billy Binks, Hero, and other Stories.—This is a capital collection of short stories by Guy Boothby—all very interesting, all characterised by a considerable amount of originality in the personages and incidents of the stories, and all written crisply and pointedly. The scenes of the stories are laid either in Australia or in French Indo-China, and the latter place furnishes a stage for the action of the characters, as yet not over familiar to readers of fiction. Under varying forms the keynote of them all is pathos, whether we see it in the picture of Billy Binks, the uncivilised wail of the Australian plains, dying happy with the baby, whom he had risked and lost his life to save, seated on the counterpane of his bed; or in the picture of the blackguard and bully Count, who deliberately consigns himself to an existence he detests in order that the woman he loved many years before should profit by his unsuspected deed of self-sacrifice. The pathos of the stories, being ably wrought out, always rings true, and is therefore always touching and interesting.

Yule Logs.—This is the suggestive title of Longman's 'Christmas Annual for '98, and 'Yule Logs' is a capital collection of eleven stories of the kind which boys delight in. It is edited by G. A. Henty, who himself contributes one of the stories entitled 'On a Mexican Rancho.' As among the other contributors appear the names of G. Manville Fenn, Kirk Munroe, Franklin Fox, Charles W. Whistler, and some more well known writers of boys' fiction, it will be seen that as a present acceptable to a boy 'Yule Logs' is likely to be much in demand. It is prettily bound and profusely and strikingly illustrated.

I have received Part 22nd of the 'History of Mankind,' by F. Ratzel (illustrated). It deals with the story of certain African races and displays the same degree of wide and deep research as the preceding numbers. A very marked feature of all the numbers is their numerous and interesting illustrations.

The August number of the 'Pall Mall Magazine' will be found in all points up to the mark of excellence for which this periodical has gained repute. A picturesque little 'Cotswold Village' and 'The Old House of Huntercombe and its Garden' furnish material for two interesting illustrated articles. 'The Royal Plate at Windsor Castle' makes another profusely illustrated article. The Marquis of Lorne has some verses on 'Old Kensington Palace Wind Vane,' and Vice-Admiral P. H. Colomb writes on 'The Lessons of the Present War.' There is an interesting article on 'Recent American Verse,' another on 'The Spaniards,' and another entitled 'The Heart of Modern Lapland.' Clark Russell continues the story of 'The Ship,' and this number sees the commencement of a sensational tale by S. R. Crockett entitled 'The Silver Skull.' Among various other items are one or two good short stories. The frontispiece is an excellent photogravure after Hugo Van der Goes entitled 'The Knight and Donor.'

I have received from Messrs G. Biondi and Co., 265, Regent-street, London W., three new songs. The first, 'Her Coming,' is both as regards words and music a fairly pretty love song, presenting no difficulties of execution to either pianist or singer. The words are by M. Hedderwick-Browne, and the music by Percy Pitt. It is the key of D major. The second, which can be obtained in the keys of C, B flat, and A flat, is called 'A Vision of Peace,'

and has a sweet and plaintive melody to match the mournful ideas expressed in the verse. The composer of both words and music is Alma Gabriel. The third, published in the keys of G, F, and E, is of a quickly attractive nature. It is a Spanish bolero song entitled 'Paquita,' and both words and music breathe a spirit of wild coquetish gaiety. It presents no difficulties even to a tyro in the way of execution. The music is by N. Zardo, and the words by Percy Pinkerton.

'Helbeck of Bannisdale,' by M. Humphrey Ward; Macmillan and Co. (Wildman and Lyle).

'Liddy Margot,' by L. B. Walford; Longman's, Green, and Co.

'Billy Binks—Hero,' by Guy Boothby; Macmillan and Co. (Wildman and Lyle).

'Yule Logs,' edited by G. A. Henty; Longman's, Green, and Co.

MINING NEWS.

SHAREMARKET.

BBETTER business was done on the Exchange during the past week in mining stocks and good advances took place in several lines. Woodstocks apparently touched bottom when 7/6 was reached and now buyers are offering as high as 9/, with no sellers below 12/6. This is no doubt the result of the additional gold-saving plant having arrived at the battery. Barrier Reefs sold as high as 5/3 and then, as holders declined to quote, buyers ceased to offer; but it is understood that those anxious to secure these shares are prepared to pay still higher rates. Low-priced Barrier stocks such as Aoteas and Iona also had attention, and it would seem as if an all-round revival of interest in this section of our goldfields was not improbable. At the Thames May Queens sold up to 5/ and were in steady demand at a slight concession upon that figure. Tararu Creeks and Alburnia shares had steady enquiry. Coronand stocks are still neglected, but at Karangahake there have been steady buyers of Talismans at 9/6, with sales at 10/, Crowns at 16/6 and Woodstocks as already indicated up to 9/. The Stanley mine, which adjoins the Woodstock, was sold this week for £1,000 cash. Beyond steady buyers of Alphas, Waitekauri stocks had little attention during the week. Low-priced shares in mines near the Waikoi Company had regular enquiry daily, and Waikoi-Silvertons had buyers up to 5/3.

The gold returns this week are limited to the Thames, the Waioatahi Company obtaining £42 from 95 tons and the Cardigan £190 from 20 tons. The official gold returns for August for the colony show an increase of £72,229 as compared with the output at the same date last year. Of a total yield during August of £133,522 Auckland contributed £53,964 and Dunedin £35,896. Under the head of silver Auckland produced 30,516oz, valued at £3,456, an increase of 11,367oz, valued at £1,274, over the corresponding month of 1897. The gold exported for the first eight months of 1898 was 188,268oz, valued at £729,751, an increase of 12,760oz, valued at £43,370, over the corresponding period of 1897. It will thus be seen that the output from the Northern goldfields is steadily increasing.

NONPAREIL.

Colours of gold are seen in the quartz broken down from the leading stone.

RUNKER'S HILL.

The 30lbs of picked stone from the cross-leader treated at the Hauraki Associated battery returned £59 5s.

CARDIGAN.

A crushing of 20 loads of quartz treated as a trial parcel from the Cardigan mine yielded 71ozs 3dwt of gold, value £190 6s.

IMPERIAL.

The low level is still penetrating fine reefing country. Several quartz veins have been met with, which leads to the belief that the ore body sought for is not far distant.

QUEEN OF BEAUTY.

At an extraordinary general meeting of shareholders in the Queen of Beauty Gold-mining Company held this week, a resolution was passed authorising the liquidation of the Company.

WELCOME FIND.

The lode at No. 3 level averages about 2ft in thickness. Colours of gold were seen in the stone taken down. The indications are still most favourable for the production of rich ore.

IVANHOE.

An extraordinary meeting of shareholders in this company was held this week to consider the position of the company.

On the motion of Mr J. Reed, seconded by Mr T. Allen, it was resolved to leave the matter in the hands of the directors to try and obtain absolute protection for six months.

WAVERLEY.

At an extraordinary meeting of shareholders held this week, on the motion of Mr Gorrie it was resolved to ask the directors to make further calls for the development of the ground.

NEW ZEALAND CROWN MINES.

The office of the New Zealand Crown Mines Company (Limited) has been removed to that of the New Zealand Mines Trust Company (Limited), Shortland-street, Auckland. Under this re-arrangement Mr R. R. Hunt ceases to be attorney, and Mr Robert Rose takes up that position.

KAPANGA TRIBUTERS.

ANOTHER RICH PATCH.

Messrs Horne and Johnston, the lucky tributers in the Kapanga mine, struck gold this week, obtaining 35lbs specimens, of the estimated value of £150. It will be remembered that these two tributers also had several large crushings earlier in the year.

TE PUKE GOLD REEFS.

No. 3 level is in a total distance of 213ft. The country rock has improved, it being of a firmer nature than when last reported. The drive passed through a small reef 4ft in diameter; 2 feet on the footwall is solid stone, which showed a trace of gold in the dish.

NEW FOUR-IN-HAND.

A notice posted on the Exchange this week stated that this company had completed the purchase of the Four-in-Hand and Cairness properties, and had allotted to the shareholders in the several companies the shares they are entitled to, and placed them on the share register.

HURAKI ASSOCIATED.

The stopes on the footwall lead continue to yield ore of payable quality, which promises to continue right through to No. 1 level. No. 3 level is now in a total distance of 366 feet. There is no change to report on the lead which is being driven upon in this level. The battery commenced crushing on Tuesday morning.

GREAT BARRIER.

In order to afford the Rev. Mr Joseph Campbell an opportunity of testing the Company's ore by the hyperchloric process, forty tons have been bagged and a large portion of that is now awaiting on the beach; and with this good weather the remainder should in the course of a few days be ready for the saw for transhipment to Te Aroha for treatment. Mr Campbell has experimented with ore samples repeatedly, and he is pretty confident that by the new process he will be able to effect a net saving of 85 to 90 per cent. of the value of the ore.

STANLEY.

The directors of the Stanley mine, Karangahake, have decided to accept an offer made to purchase the property for £1,000, less 2½ per cent. commission. On August 30th no less than 75,247 shares in this company forfeited for a halfpenny call were sold by auction at 1/ per thousand. The purchaser subsequently wrote offering to buy the Stanley mine and plant for £720. The directors declined to accept less than £1,000 and this week the property was sold for that sum, less 2½ per cent. commission allowed.

MARATOTO.

At a meeting of the shareholders in the Walker's Maratoto Special Claim, held yesterday in Mr R. McDonald Scott's office, it was decided to form a company to work the claim, to be called the Maratoto G.M. Company (Limited). It was resolved that the capital of the company shall be £25,000 in 100,000 shares of 5/ each,

4/ to be considered paid up. Of the shares, 50,000 will be allotted to the owners of the special claim, 10,000 will be sold at 6d each to provide a working capital of £250, and 40,000 will be held for the company to be dealt with by the directors as they deem fit in the interests of the company. The Bank of New Zealand was appointed bankers to the company. Mr R. McDonald Scott was appointed legal manager, Mr D. B. McDonald auditor, and Messrs Jackson and Russell solicitors. The following directors were elected:—Messrs J. McCombie, H. H. Adams, J. Endeian, C. McLean, and J. Kneebone.

MONOWAI GOLD MINES.

In the Monowai section north of No. 1 rise, for 70 feet the reef has kept its usual course and quality, which is most encouraging. The manager expects very shortly to be crushing from this section of the mine. Tests of this ore have been taken, and are most satisfactory. This confirms the process adopted re its treatment at the mine; as no other method can be found so effectual as concentration, amalgamation, and roasting, the concentrators which can then be treated by cyanide most effectually. In the Gem mine the work done has been opening up the old level connecting with the Crown workings. The reef is improving in quality northwards.

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