

OUR INDUSTRIES.

No. XXV.

QUARTZ MINING.

(Continued.)

If we could find similar employment for all of these boys, what a paradise of mining the Dominion would be. As it is, we must put up with the handicap of diversion of a percentage of our best to other lands for lack of the career denied to them in their own. Still, the schools are good for the mining interest, and that interest must grow and become more absorbent.

Then there is the question of sanitation, and that is the cause of much expense and of corresponding benefit. In the same connection there is a vast body of mining law which guards against accident and fixes the responsibility of the owners and managers and workmen with a nicety beyond praise. This is part of the complicated body of law which arranges the whole question of the working goldfields, of which more by and by.

Lastly, this mining in quartz reefs is expensive in the matter of machinery. Metallurgy placed on the right basis, the mechanical difficulty came next to the surface. Vaguely the public imagines of the same. Precisely the number of machines of all kinds has been returned as follows:— In the Auckland quartz districts there are 38 rock breakers, 1221 stamps, 3 ore crushers, 262 berdans, 32 pans, 22 settlers, 204 mortars, 122 retorts, 62 melting furnaces, 33 assaying furnaces, 22 cyanide patents, and 12 concentrating plants.

On the West Coast of the South Island there are 6 rock breakers, 299 stamps, 37 berdans, 4 settlers, 18 mortars, 29 retorts, 9 mining furnaces, 4 assaying furnaces, 10 cyanide plants, 1 chlorination plant, and 3 concentration plants.

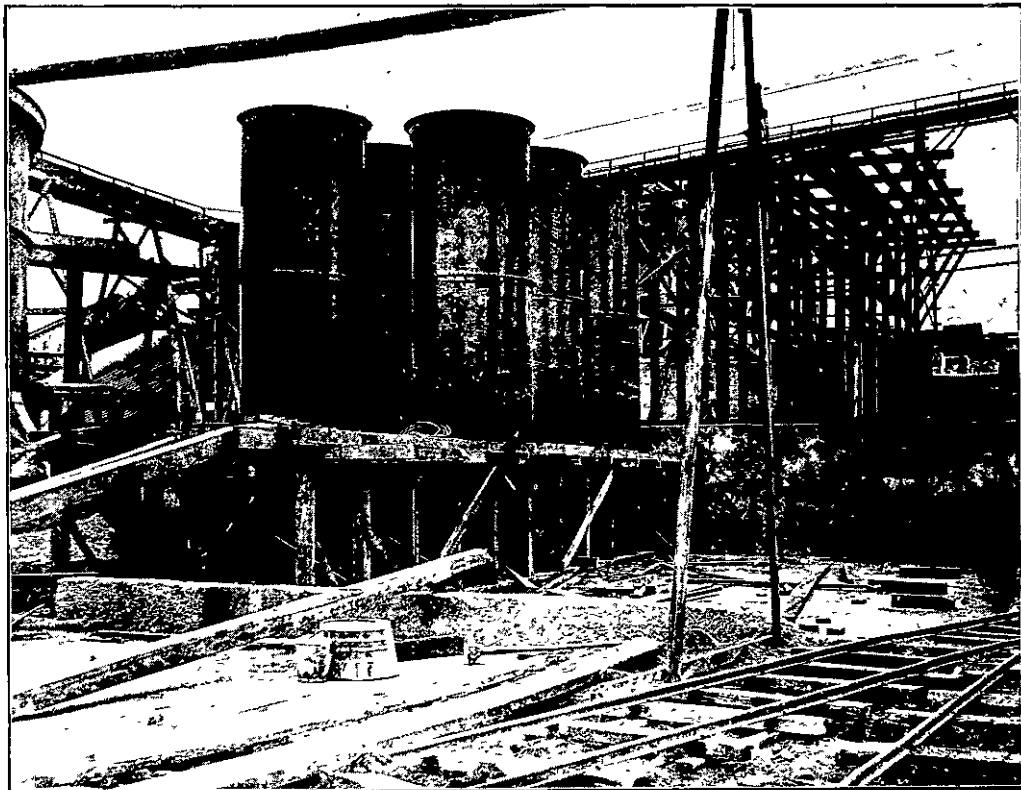
In Otago the numbers are:—9 rock breakers, 343 stamps, 3 ore crushers, 39 berdans, 4 pans, 2 settlers, 15 mortars, 14 retorts, 12 smelting furnaces, 8 assay furnaces, 7 cyanide plants, and 8 concentration plants.

The value of this machinery is, with the exception of Auckland, not given separately, in the return, which sets the whole of the mining plants of the Dominion collectively down at £1,756,629. The Auckland quartz machinery is set down at £478,000, and the others may be estimated—Nelson at £150,000 and Otago at £50,000, which brings the value for the whole of the quartz industry up to about £628,000.

Of the 62 mining companies registered in the north it is reported that their subscribed capital is £819,181 and that they have paid up £257,972 of this amount. No figures are given separately of the quartz companies in other parts of the Dominion, but it is evident, judging by the proportion the industry in the North bears to the industry in other places, that there is not a great deal to add to the amount.

It will be seen that the quartz mining industry is valuable, complicated, and hopeful; that it uses much machinery depends heavily on science, and employs much capital, as well as many men. It remains to add that there is a body of law by which it is regulated, which it behoves every man connected with it to understand.

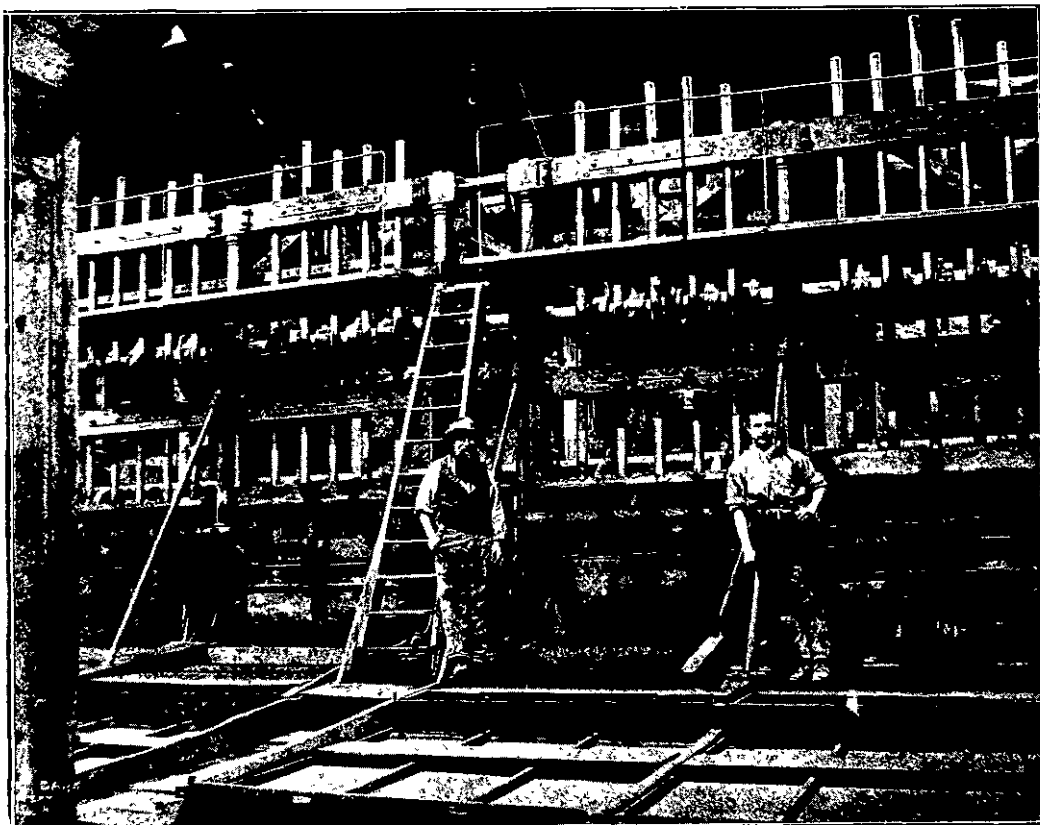
The Mining Acts contain all the most up-to-date provisions for effective regulation



CONCENTRATES TREATMENT PLANT, WAIKINO BATTERY.

of the rights of mining property, for the protection of life, and for comfort in mines. They deal with the division of the colony into districts, and the classification of the lands therein; they define the mining privileges and water concessions, and prescribe the conditions on which they can be held; they order the working of mines and control their regulation, including the examination of mine managers, battery superintendents, and engine drivers, and the issue of the necessary certificates; in a word, they take cognisance of all matters pertaining to the industry, such as partnerships, the registration of appliances and processes, the reports of mining yields, the compensation for injuries, and the administration of justice.

The Mining Companies and Companies Acts require little reference. It is worth noting that the latter body of legislation has been brought up to the latest London standard by the amending Act of 1900, in the matter of promoters' shares. Promoters' shares (which do not, by the way, include paid-up shares given as part-payment for a mining property) must now (so far as the Companies Acts are concerned) be set forth in all prospectuses; without a list of them no joint-stock company can be registered; they are unsaleable for two years after the formation of a company, unless a year's dividend has been paid during that period; and, in the case of winding up during the period, they entitle their holders to no share in the assets of liquidation.



KEEP-IT-DARK BATTERY, REEFTON