

Herewith please find statement showing the revenue and expenditure on account of the Argyle Water-race from the 1st April, 1883, to the 31st March, 1884; also number of men employed by the race, and average earnings after deducting working expenses.

STATEMENT of Receipts and Expenditure for the year ending the 31st March, 1884.

	£	s.	d.
Amount of revenue obtained by sales of water	324	7	0
Expenditure on maintenance of race	371	10	0
Average earnings per man per week after deducting expenses for working	3	0	0
Number of men employed			12
Number of ounces of gold obtained			600

I have, &c.,

DENIS DOYLE,
Manager.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

No. 21.

The CHAIRMAN, Mount Ida Water-race Trust, to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Office of Mount Ida Water-race Trust, Naseby, 20th May, 1884.

I have the honour to forward the annual report of the proceedings of the Mount Ida Water-race Trust, in accordance with section 25 of "The Mount Ida Water-race Act, 1878," together with statement of receipts and expenditure for the twelve months ending the 31st December, 1883.

The income for the year ending the 31st December last amounted to £1,545 5s. 11d., showing a decrease (compared with last year) of £232 9s. 3d. This falling-off in the revenue is attributable to the ground which the race commands, situated principally on the west side of Main Gully, becoming poorer each year, and the demand for water being proportionately less. The expenditure for the same period amounted to £1,877 4s. 2d., being a reduction, compared with last year, of £25 18s. 2d. The outstanding accounts for water sold, brought up to date, amount to £1,280 5s. 7d., as against £1,364 13s. 8d. for last year. During the year the payments for sales of water have in almost every instance been met, and no fresh losses of any consequence have been made. The greater portion of the sum above mentioned (£1,280 5s. 7d.) was for water supplied to parties in opening up and prospecting for new ground shortly after the works were opened, which in many instances proved failures, and where the yield of gold was insufficient to pay for tools bought for the purpose.

It will be seen by the above figures that the expenditure of the Trust has now reached that point which cannot admit of much further reduction if the present efficiency and safety of the works are to be maintained.

The survey of the race extension to Spec Gully is nearly completed. A shorter route than that by the line hitherto suggested has been discovered, and the cost of cutting through the spur will be less than by the longer route.

Regarding the maintenance of the works, experience has shown that a certain amount of damage has been sustained each year from floods. The great length of the head-race (nearly 70 miles), and crossing as it does about twenty creeks, is in itself sufficient to show that it is impossible to provide against damage caused by floods. A continuance of wet weather, or a sudden thaw, converts some of these creeks into mountain torrents, which discharge enormous boulders and large quantities of *débris* into the race, breaking the sides and doing other damage. Last season the race suffered considerably from floods, which were not only more frequent, but also caused greater damage to the works, than hitherto.

Through the accumulation of tailings in Wet Gully, across which the head-race runs, caused by the discharge from claims higher up, the rights for which existed prior to the cutting of the Government race, it has been found necessary to come to an arrangement with the claimholders to convey the water of the race across the gully in pipes, they agreeing to pay half of the cost, which is estimated altogether at about £120. This arrangement will obviate any further expense by either party in keeping the race clear.

The following is an accurate return of the quantity of gold produced within the County of Maniototo for the four years ending 31st March, 1884:—

Twelve months ending 31st March, 1881	9,640oz.
Twelve months ending 31st March, 1882	10,410oz.
Twelve months ending 31st March, 1883	8,920oz.
Twelve months ending 31st March, 1884	8,980oz.

It will thus be seen that the yield of gold in the district has been steady, and that last year's return shows an increase. The exact quantity of gold the works have been instrumental in producing cannot be correctly stated, but from the value of water sold during the year (£1,545 5s. 11d.) it is evident they have contributed a large share of the total quantity produced. These works are also the means of giving employment to a large number of men, who contribute no inconsiderable amount of indirect revenue in the shape of gold duty, miners' rights, and fees for other privileges.

I have, &c.,

WM. GUFFIE,
Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.