

ground ; but it is still a question whether the present supply of water will be sufficient to carry on their extensive operations, and if not the water-race will have to be extended to the several creeks that are on a level with the race line, and possibly may have to be taken into the Arahura River before a large permanent supply in dry weather can be obtained. They have a great depth of wash-drift, with a little fine gold distributed all through it, and there does not appear to be, so far as yet discovered, any permanent bottom. If the quantity of water anticipated is available, very poor ground will pay for working, as the quantity of dirt that can be washed will be enormous. Great credit is due to Mr. P. Comisky, of Auckland, who has been the means of two large and influential companies constructing works of great magnitude, involving an immense expenditure, to develop the resources of this and the Ross district. The Westland County Council, being subsidized by Government, is constructing the following roads and tracks :—

*Track from Duffer's Creek, Bowen and Okarito Road, to the Sea-beach.*—A contract has been let for the construction of this track, and the work is now being proceeded with : when completed it will afford facilities for getting between the inland road and the ocean beach. This is the only point for fifteen miles on either side where there is any line of communication with the beach, except in the beds of the Wanganui and Waitaha Rivers, and when these are flooded they are very dangerous rivers to cross.

*Track, Ross Borough Boundary to Mount Greenland.*—There have been two surveys made of this track : the first one showed, when the plans were completed, that the grades were one in three in some places. When shown to the Chief Surveyor of Westland for approval, he very wisely condemned it, and another survey has been made, and a track laid out with better grades. Plans are being prepared, and the work will very soon be ready for contract.

*Continuation of Track from Back Creek to Eel Creek.*—Two sections of this track have been let by contract, and at the time I went over it the contractor represented the work as being completed ; but it was so totally differently constructed from what was shown on the plans and specifications, that the County Engineer, who accompanied me, would not pass any portion of it. The county, it seems, has two responsible overseers—the County Engineer, who selects and lays out lines of road all over the county, and looks after the construction of the roads on the north side of the Hokitika and Kanieri Rivers ; and an overseer who looks after the construction of all roads on the south side, and reports directly to the Council. This track, being on the south side of these rivers, was under the overseer's control ; the grades, drains, culverts, and width of track shown on plans and specified in specification were totally disregarded, and a foot-track substituted, following the inclination of the surface of the ground.

*Improvement and Construction of Track up Gentle Annie Terrace.*—This work is in course of construction, and ought by this time to be completed, or nearly so.

*Road from Duffer's Creek, Greenstone Road, to Fifteen-mile Peg, Christchurch Road.*—This road is in course of construction ; the portion of it that is nearly completed shows that the work has been carefully laid out, and plans and specifications adhered to. It was originally intended for a horse-track, but a portion of it is widened into a dray-road, which will give greater facilities to get materials to the pipe-line on the Waimea Water-race, in case of any repairs being required, and enable supplies to be brought to the miners who are working in the several gullies along the line of road.

*Grey.*—The principal mining centres in this district are in the vicinity of Westbrook, Cameron's, Cape Terrace, Barrytown, No-town, Nelson Creek, Orwell Creek, and Granville. At Westbrook the gold-workings are chiefly confined to hydraulic sluicing ; at Cameron's and Cape Terrace, to sinking and tunnelling. At Barrytown a great many of the tunnelling claims are worked out, and those parties who have water-races and a small supply of water are commencing to sluice the terraces, which have a little gold distributed all through the drift. There are thirty miners employed in the different terraces between Barrytown and Deadman's, who are reported to be making small wages ; but they have a very limited supply of water. At No-town there is very little water available for hydraulic sluicing, and the workings are chiefly confined to tunnelling. There is a large area of ground and heavy deposit of drift in this neighbourhood that is reputed to be payable for working if a large supply of water were available ; but there is no source in the vicinity of the field where this can be obtained, unless at an enormous expense. At Nelson Creek the workings are wholly confined to hydraulic sluicing. The miners are supplied with water from the Nelson Creek water-race, which was constructed, and is wholly maintained, by Government. The cost of this water-race up to the present time has been £89,833 19s. 7d., and the revenue derived from sales of water during the year, after deducting the cost of maintenance, was £491 10s. 8d., or a little over a half per cent. on the capital invested. The bridges and flumes on this race are showing considerable signs of decay, especially wherever red-pine timber has been used : even the heart-wood of this timber is not all that can be desired, for there are some portions of a spar or boom, that is apparently all of the same class of heart-wood, intermixed with red-robin seams, showing decay in small pieces here and there, while other portions of it are equally as sound as when it was put into the structure. A considerable amount of repairs have been effected by the manager, and a number of the bridges strengthened ; but the state of the timber generally is such that it will have to be replaced from time to time, so long as it can be done in the ordinary course of maintenance. The known auriferous terraces that this water-race commands are getting gradually worked out, and, unless some fresh ground is opened, the receipts from this water-race will be rapidly decreasing. An enterprising gentleman on this field, Mr. M. Roche, a storekeeper, has commenced, with a party of miners, to work the Nelson Creek flat, where there is no fall for hydraulic sluicing, with the same appliance as that used by Mr. Perry in Gabriel's Gully, and if they are successful in their effort it will be the commencement of a new era in gold-mining on this field, as there is a large area of flat ground in the valley of Nelson Creek that can be worked on this principle, by water from the Nelson Creek race. Mr. Roche, on seeing a description of this appliance in the Gold Fields Report last year, sent one of his party to see Mr. Perry's appliances in Gabriel's Gully, and he was so pleased with