

when it is then ready for bagging, or to be taken to the mill to mix with oil. The greater portion of it is sold in powder, and mixed by those requiring it. The mixed paint is sold in five-gallon drums. Each drum requires about four gallons of oil to reduce the paint to a proper consistency. The paint in this state is sold at £30 per ton, and the powder, in a dry state, is sold for from £15 to £17 per ton, according to the way it is made up. If put in 28lb. bags, and four of these bags placed in a wooden box, the price is £17; if put up in 28lb. bags, with two of such bags covered by an outer bag, the price is £16; and if put up in single bags of 56lb. each the price is £15 per ton. The colours of the paint vary from a dark brown to a dull yellow. The proprietor is endeavouring to get still a lighter colour. The dull colour seems to be the only objection to using it to paint town-buildings with. However, I observed a number of buildings in Collingwood and Nelson painted with this paint, and in no instance did it appear to change colour or have that mildewed appearance that many paints have after having been for some time exposed to the weather. There seemed to be great defect in the grinding-machinery. The berdans that are used are not suitable for grinding, as the process is far too slow for the quantity required to be put through; and also the settling-pits are defective. The machinery required for this work is a series of Mackay pans, similar to those used by Brown Brothers, at Tararu, Thames. One of these pans would grind far more than the four berdans that are at present employed. The settling-boxes or pits are also too narrow and shallow to allow the sediment to settle freely. On pointing this out to the proprietor he stated that this was the trouble he had to contend against: the stamping-battery crushed the ore faster than he could put it through the berdans, and he wished to get some different grinding-appliance to overcome this.

There are other paint-works near the Onehau Creek, owned by Mr. Cogan. These differ somewhat from Washbourn's principle: the paint is got from iron in the soil, and not from the ore itself. However, I had no opportunity of visiting these works, and cannot describe the method of preparation; but from what I could learn from those that have used the paint it does not retain its colour so well as that prepared from the ore.

Anatoki.—There are a few miners still employed up the Anatoki Valley and in the tributaries; but the want of tracks is a great drawback to prospecting this part of the country. Men have to carry for some distance their provisions on their backs, and unless the ground is rich men will not do this. From what I could learn the ground is very poor, and the miners are only making small wages.

To sum up the various workings in the Collingwood District, it is a place where a great many minerals exist. Some of them, especially iron and coal, are abundant; but, as far as the auriferous nature of the country is concerned, the gold seems to be widely scattered, with small although rich patches here and there, which makes it a diggings more suitable for individual miners than for large companies.

WAKAMARINA.

There is very little doing on this field of any note. There are from forty to fifty miners at work in the bed of the river and on the low terraces along its banks, extending for a distance of about twenty miles. As far as I can judge from the places where gold has been found, the gold has been washed down the river from time to time from heavy landslips that have taken place, and has then been deposited on the shallow bars in the bed of the river. Whenever the gold is got on the terraces it is in river-wash, which shows that the original bed has been changed, and that these terraces were at some previous period the bed of the stream. Gold has also been found in some of the creeks coming from the range on the northern side of the river, such as Deep Creek and Dead Horse Creek, in both of which rich deposits of gold have been found. This would lead one to look for gold being found in the range between these creeks. There is a large quartz reef runs through this range, and colours of gold have been found in it; but the character of the gold is different from that found in the creeks running into the Wakamarina River. Heavy pieces of gold have been found in these creeks, mixed with quartz, which have evidently come out of a slip from this range; but so far its source cannot be traced.

Extremely rich patches of gold have from time to time been got on the shallow bars in the bed of the river, but whenever these bars have been easily worked parties of individual miners have worked them in ordinary river-claims. About three years ago a company was formed in Nelson, which took up a certain distance of a gorge below the junction of Deep Creek, with the view of turning the river and working its bed in the gorge. After cutting a new channel through a terrace, and constructing a dam at each end of their claim, they tried to pump the water out of the gorge, but, after several attempts, completely failed to do this. The machinery they had was not capable of contending with the water that percolated through the shingle on which their dams were constructed. After expending about £7,000 without getting any gold, the company was wound up, and the claim and plant were sold to Mr. Turner, who is the representative of an English company called the Ravenscliffe Company, who, I am informed, hold several mines in different parts of the world. He was at the time of my visit making preparations to work the bed of the cutting that the Nelson company constructed to turn the river, and which now proves to have been the original bed at some previous period. The river is again turned through the gorge, and a dam constructed at the upper end of the cutting to prevent the flood-water from the river getting down the channel, and a dam is also constructed at the bottom of Deep Creek to raise the level of the water in the creek to work an overshot water-wheel to pump the water from the bed of the cutting, which is expected to be about 18ft. deep. The works are so far advanced that they expect to have the whole of the bed of the cutting worked out by the end of April. I have since learned that this channel has been worked out, and that it paid the company very well for working.

The same company have another claim about two miles higher up the river, in Maori Gorge, where they have built a substantial dam across the bed of the river at the upper end of their claim, with a timber flume at one side to carry the water of the river below their workings. They