

The gold is of a coarser character than that found on any other field on the West Coast. Some nuggets as large as 30oz. are said to have been obtained, which cannot have been carried a long distance by water, as they resemble the gold found in lodes, having sharp angular edges, and impregnated with quartz. Many of the claims in the lower portion of the creek still continue to give their owners good wages for working, and it is believed that the lead of gold will yet be traced into deep ground in Cullen's Flat.

RIMU.

During last year gold was discovered by Messrs. Beatty and party on an alluvial-drift terrace, about a mile to the southward of the Back Creek lead, near Rimu. This discovery is of considerable importance, as it may be the means of tracing the gold towards Ross. The sinking is from 75ft. to 100ft. in depth. Two different gold-bearing layers have been passed through, which are from 3ft. to 6ft. in thickness, yielding from 2dwts. to 10dwts of gold to the load. About twenty-seven claims are considered to be payable for working, in which 114 men are employed. All the gold has so far been found on a false bottom, having similar gravel-drift underneath to that passed through, which indicates that there is a great probability of richer layers of auriferous wash-drift being found at a deeper level. A considerable amount of prospecting is going on under the supervision of the miners' association of the district.

ROSS.

This is the most interesting alluvial goldfield in the colony. Nine different auriferous layers of wash-drift have been passed through, and no main bottom yet reached. The deepest is about 250ft. below sea-level, and underneath this there is a brown gravel-drift full of small rounded sandstone boulders, similar in character to that found on the top of Mount Greenland, about 3,000ft. above sea-level. The nature of the wash-drift found on top of this bottom coincides with that found on the top of the mountain referred to; and some of it has proved very rich in gold. There is no doubt when this wash-drift was deposited on Ross Flat the whole of the country was at a much higher elevation, and probably the source of the gold will yet be found back in the mountains, as there is sufficient evidence to show that the Mikonui River has been flowing in a different direction from its present course, and this river was probably the means of depositing the large accumulations of auriferous drifts on the flat. In the early days of the field a large population was engaged in working the shallow ground, but in following the gold into the flat, the quantity of water to contend with was beyond the means of private parties getting machinery to overcome it. The greater portion of this ground has been held for the last nine years by the Ross United Company, who erected a pumping-plant and proved the richness of the deep levels, but they soon found that the pumping appliances were far too small to contend with the water, consequently these levels have been abandoned for several years, and the top levels have been partly worked by means of shafts and partly by an elevating plant, where only a few men on tribute are employed, who are paying the company about 35 per cent. of the gross yield of gold they obtain. The condition of affairs is anything but satisfactory. The claim-owners have not sufficient capital to procure the necessary appliances, yet they have expended so much money that they refuse to face the inevitable. Meantime the miners in the district and the colony suffer.

RANGITOTO.

A considerable amount of prospecting has been done in this district, and it is reported that silver has been discovered in payable quantities in a semi-decomposed granite rock. Some of the assays made from stone in this locality show it to contain a high percentage of silver; but whether it will prove payable for working on a large scale has not yet been determined.

SOUTH WESTLAND.

A small population still continues to get a livelihood by working the auriferous sand on the ocean beaches between the mouth of the Mikonui River and Jackson's Bay; but very little prospecting has ever been done inland, although some good patches of gold have been found in the vicinity of the Mapourika Lake, and in the Waiho River. The large quantity of gold found on the ocean beaches, especially on the Five-mile, Gillespie's, Bruce Bay, and the beaches south of the Paringa River, clearly indicates that rich deposits will yet be found inland when the country becomes properly explored and prospected. The Waiho River has, no doubt, been the means of bringing down the gold found on the Five-mile