

pumps each 9in. in diameter, worked by an overshot water-wheel 22ft. in diameter, having a 4ft.-breast, and these pumps were at the time of my visit working at the rate of eleven strokes per minute, with a stroke of 8ft. 6in., which is too high a speed to work at economically. The workings up the creek-bed are carried on for a distance of 207ft. from the bottom of the shaft; the width of the lead being about 18ft. They have still several hundred feet to go before getting to their upper boundary, and about 80ft. on the lower side of the shaft to their other boundary. At the time of my visit there were nine men employed in the claim. Since my visit, the ground has been paying very well; but this claim, like all others on the field, is subject to be flooded out after heavy rain. If there is heavy rain, the company find it is of no benefit to keep the pumps at work; but as soon as the flood goes down in the creek they start pumping again, when it takes from eight to fourteen days to get the water out.

Golden Gate Company.—This company's shaft is 118ft. in depth. It is constructed 10ft. by 10ft. for a distance of 29ft., and then taken in to 6ft. by 7ft., the object being to puddle back the water in the top layers of drift. They have driven from the bottom of their shaft for a distance of 35ft., apparently in the deep ground or old bed of the creek, but the bottom rises here very rapidly, and is very smooth, as though it had been worn with sharp gravel and sand passing over it. This bed is about 40ft. in width, but they had not up to the time of my visit got much gold. It is however questionable if another old channel will not yet be found further into the side next the range to the south of their shaft, or it may be that the portion of the creek-bed they have worked, having so great a fall, has formed a sluice where the gold has been swept through. The company has 900ft. of the creek-bed to their upper boundary from their shaft, and 60ft. to their lower boundary. This company uses a small portable engine for pumping and winding, the pump being 10in. in diameter. There were eleven men employed in the claim at the time of my visit, but since then they have suspended operations for want of funds.

Alice Fell Company.—This company has from first to last done a large amount of work. They have been prospecting the flat ever since the field was opened, and have sunk shaft after shaft in trying to get into the deep ground. When this party first commenced to sink it was anticipated by the miners at that time that the deep ground would be found near the present creek-bed. But this has proved a fallacy; and when the formation of the place is studied, the reason of this is apparent. The water coming through the gorge struck a band of hard rock, which now forms a sort of promontory at the mouth, and was the means of turning the water more to the southwards. A large slip from the range on the south side of the creek subsequently took place, and blocked up the creek, causing the water to flow against the foot of the range on the northern side where the creek now flows. This slip is clearly visible, and portions of the Township of Cullensville are now built on it. The last shaft this company sunk is 120ft. in depth, and after driving a short distance it was found that the ground was still dipping southwards; and on sinking down in the drive with the aid of a small California pump, 6oz. of gold were obtained. They had not got into proper working order on the lead at the time of my visit. There were seven men employed in the claim. Information was subsequently supplied me that this company have got on to the lead, and doing fairly well when they can work; but after every heavy shower of rain their claim is flooded out, their pumping plant not being large enough to contend with any extra water.

Davis and Carr's Claim.—This is a terrace claim on the opposite side of the creek from the Township of Cullensville. It has been worked ever since the commencement of the field, and has paid steady wages, and likely to do so for some time to come. There appears to be a great deal of ground here that would pay for working by hydraulic-sluicing if there were a good supply of water brought on to the ground, and this can be got out of the Mahakipawa Creek as soon as the claims in the creek-bed are worked out. There is a considerable number of overshot water-wheels used for pumping these claims at the present time, so that the whole of the water could not be diverted for sluicing the terraces until the claims in the creek-bed are worked out.

Wakamarina.

There are still a few miners working in this locality, but there is not much gold being obtained. Recently a rich patch of gold-bearing drift has been discovered at Dome Creek, by Flanigan and party, who are said to have obtained 260oz. of gold.

The Gorge Claim, on which a large amount of capital has been expended, is again taken up by a Melbourne syndicate; but the old story is again repeated. A flood came down the river and filled up all their workings before they were able to get to the bottom. Their prospects do not look bright. A gentleman from the Thames, who was employed by the syndicate to report upon this ground, informed me that he considers there is a prospect of gold yet being got in this gorge. It is, however, very doubtful if ever there will be a sufficient quantity obtained to pay for the outlay in getting it; and, if ever it is worked, more energy will have to be displayed in getting the drift excavated than has hitherto been done.

NELSON DISTRICT.

Collingwood.

There has been very little done in this district beyond prospecting. The company mentioned in my last report which was formed to work the ground taken up by Messrs. Adams and Gilmer, and Mr. Travers' freehold, have done a good deal of prospecting, but there has been no legitimate sluicing done to prove whether there is any large area that will pay for working or not. The prospects obtained from different parts of the ground last year did not give so encouraging results as were anticipated; still the manager of the company, in a report to the shareholders, showed that the ground was not a duffer, although not nearly so rich as represented. This company purchased the water-rights, water-race, and all the buildings and property of the Red Hill Company last year for about £600—a property which was floated in England for £150,000, and of this about £98,000