

in course of construction at Fairdown for the purpose of obtaining the fall necessary to work a portion of the high terrace where gold-mining has been carried on for a long series of years. This company has fair prospects of success, and will probably be the initiative of a series of such undertakings at various places along the line of terraces to the Buller River. Over the "pakihi" mining would have to be carried on by means of elevators.

*Block II.*—This in outline forms a parallelogram, and has a frontage on the coast-line, commencing at a point two miles and a quarter south of Cape Foulwind. The frontage of the block extends south along the coast-line two miles and a half, and, in depth, inland for six miles, the back boundary reaching to Bald Hill at the north-eastern corner of Addison's Flat. The area comprises 10,000 acres. Towards the coast-line the country is covered with bush, and east of Wilson's Lead there is a low range also covered with forest; but the greater part of the area is swampy "pakihi" country that can maintain nothing but rushes and semi-aquatic plants, and is therefore totally unfit for cultivation. The block may be divided into three areas, the better to facilitate a description of it. There are—(1) the coastward region; (2) the open "pakihi," with bush along the low ground of the north tributary of the Okari River; (3) the succession of terraces to the Buller River, two to four miles from its mouth.

(1.) Beyond the rocky coast immediately south of Cape Foulwind the sandy beach, commencing within the boundaries of the block, extends the whole frontage to and beyond the mouth of the Totara River. Gold is obtained by "beach-combing" on the coast-line, but immediately inland of that the thick and tangled character of the bush prevents the efficient exploration of the different black-sand leads and the continuation of the coarser auriferous deposits that are known to be present in the next block to the south. This is the only area within the block in which there are any patches of land that could be cultivated, but these are totally unimportant, the better lands of the limestone hills lying towards Cape Foulwind being outside the block.

(2.) The "pakihi" are generally swampy, and where dry the surface is constituted of low elevations formed of black sand, which form ridges and mounds, or low and broad but only slight elevations above the general nearly dead-flat of the plain. The "pakihi" plain has a gentle slope to the south-west and south. The rocks present are lines and isolated patches of auriferous black sand, and coarser granitic gravels that also contain payable deposits of gold. Along the higher grounds of the east end of this area there are heavy and extensive deposits of black sand, which would probably pay to work were it possible, short of great expense, to bring a sufficient hydraulic-head water-supply on to the ground. As matters are, a promising field lies untouched; the only workings on this area being Wilson's Lead on the west side of the bush-clad ridge, already mentioned. This lead is continued to the north, and is worked in Bradshaw's Terrace, within less than a mile of the beach between Cape Foulwind and the mouth of the Buller. Could water under pressure be brought on to this central part of the block there can be little doubt that gold would be worked at many places now either abandoned or unopened.

(3.) This comprises the eastern end of the block, and consists of the two higher of the series of terraces that have been cut by the Buller from the level of the north-eastern part of Addison's Flat.

On the higher of these terraces there is clearly an old channel of the Buller River, and at a lower level gold-workings (now abandoned) have been carried on. The gold was said to be in the surface-gravels only, but with a powerful water-supply results would have been different, and the general body of the stuff to a moderate depth might have been made to pay. Over this part the surface of the ground is not so marshy, except towards the south-west side of the terrace flats, but for all that the soils are exceedingly poor, the dry stony ground growing only a stunted variety of manuka scrub. The miners located on this block are on or in the neighbourhood of Wilson's Lead and Bradshaw's Terrace, which should have been included in this or a separate reserve.

One favourable feature, as furthering the interests of mining over this and the adjoining blocks, is that the depth of wash, black sand, or granite shingle, as the case may be, is not inordinately great, and the bottom, consisting of blue tertiary sands, or sandy clay, is easily reached in all ordinary workings.

*Block III.*—This block lies immediately to the south of Block II., and is of equal area—viz., 10,000 acres. It has a frontage on the coast-line of three miles, and extends back to the eastward a distance of six miles at the north and south extremities of the back line, but in the middle of the block the distance from the beach to the boundary-line is only four miles. This is due to the fact that a portion (the north-western corner of the south-western extension) of the Buller Coal Reserve occupies part of the rectangular area that would be included inside the maximum measurements. This triangular area of coal reserve extends west to the forks of the Okari River near where crossed by the Westport-Charleston Road. The Okari River, with its tributaries Dirty Mary's Creek and Mountain Creek, drain the block, and form convenient channels for the discharge into them and the carrying away of silt and the fine tailings from the various claims working within the boundaries of the block. The surface of the block is a gently-sloping plain from the foot of the Big Terrace, along a line between Bald Hill and the point of the terrace half a mile south of the Shamrock Claim to the sea. The heights along this line vary from 140ft. to 100ft., and constitute the amount of fall across Addison's Flat to the sea. The surface is totally barren, and, from appearances at the present time, utterly irreclaimable. Despite the drainage-channels cut across and into the "pakihi" by the Okari River and its various tributaries, within a few chains of the brow of the depressions within which these run, the ground becomes swampy, and generally in wet weather so boggy as to be impassable on foot. Even where comparative dry and hard ground is met with, the vegetation is akin to that found on the softer grounds, except where low black-sand ridges rise a few feet above the general level. On these, and along the banks of the different streams, moderate sized forest trees break the dull uniformity of the swampy plain. The character of the vegetation over the forestless "pakihi" retains the rain-water, and, acting like a sponge, prevent its escape down declivities over