

The little rush that took place at the Manorburn a year or two ago has not resulted in anything permanent being discovered. Two or three parties still remain there, but I think a bare living only is obtained.

Jackson, Campbell, and party, at Tucker Hill, who spent many years of labour, were compelled, through shortness of water and through being hampered by borrowed money, to give up, and the property was purchased by Messrs. Rivers and J. Gartley. The ground is said to be undoubtedly good, but, until a more reliable supply of water can be obtained, I fear the new purchasers will have difficulty in making it pay. Several parties are working in the various gullies and creeks adjoining, notably Conroy's, Blackman's, Aldinga, and the Fraser, and from appearances are quite satisfied.

Dredging.

Rapid strides have been made in this industry, and to it the permanency of the district must greatly depend. There seems to be practically no limit to the ground that can be worked by this method. Beaches, banks, and flats which years ago could not be approached by a dredge are now being operated upon with the greatest ease.

The Manuherikia River, with its adjacent flats, has been pegged out from Alexandra to the mouth of the Chatto Creek, a distance of about eleven miles. As yet only one dredge is working—viz., the Manorburn Company. The returns of this dredge are not made public, but I am informed from a reliable source that the results are highly payable. Two other dredges are in course of construction, one of which will soon be completed.

In the Molyneux River there are twelve dredges in active operation, and one undergoing conversion from a current-wheel to steam which will soon be at work in the Victoria Company's claim at Clyde.

The Molyneux Hydraulic Company's claim at Alexandra, which for some considerable time had been worked unsuccessfully by means of hydraulic sluicing, has now upon it what may be termed without doubt the most commodious and efficient dredge upon the river. She is only just completed, and therefore nothing can be said as to her future prospects, except this: that should the ground turn out to be anything approaching the quality it is supposed, with such a complete dredge to work it success must follow. The following is a description of the hull and machinery: "The dimensions of the dredge are as follows: Length, 95 ft.; breadth of beam, 27 ft. 8 in.; depth, 6 ft. 6 in.; width of well, 5 ft. 6 in. The hull is very substantially built of timber, having blue-gum frames planked with kauri. The bow gantry is especially strong, in order that the mooring-lines may be carried over it when working the high banks on the company's claim. The hog-posts and the rods are very massive, and serve to support the high elevator and prevent hogging of the portion. The dredging machinery is the heaviest yet made for gold-dredging, being upwards of 90 tons weight, and in strength is only surpassed by the Dunedin Harbour Board's dredge '222.' The ladder is 63 ft. long from centre to centre of tumbler shafts. The buckets have each a capacity of $4\frac{1}{2}$ cubic feet, and when running full will deliver 2 cubic yards per minute, or 120 cubic yards per hour. The upper and lower tumblers are of steel. The buckets deliver into a hopper-plate lined with steel, having two branches (which divide the material) leading into two revolving screens or cylinders running parallel. This is the first occasion two screens have been used, and another new feature is the use of a worm in the screws, of angle steel. This worm or thread brings the material along at a regular rate, and keeps the wash in the screen a definite time, thus insuring perfect treatment. Great interest was manifested in the working of these screens, as it had been freely predicted they would be a failure. They, however, worked perfectly. The screened material is treated in the usual manner on side-tables. The rough gravel or tailings slide down a delivery-plate into the elevator-buckets. The elevator is the longest yet made, being over 60 ft. in length, and capable of stacking the tailings to a height of 40 ft. above the water-line. Great improvements have been made in the elevator buckets and links. The tumblers are seven-sided, and the power is applied to the lower tumbler, thus saving the extra weight of gearing on the outer end of the elevator. So easy does the elevator work that we saw the elevator turned by one man at the driving pulley before the belt was put on. For the mooring-lines a powerful steam-winch of improved design is used, and the trial showed it to be very powerful, quick-acting, and handy, while the gear is made very strong to avoid breakages. A duplex steam-pump is placed in the pontoon, delivering water through a hydrant at the starboard bow in order to break down the high banks. The water for the tables is supplied by a centrifugal pump, which, together with the duplex pump, were supplied by Tangye Brothers (R. B. Denniston, agent). Steam is generated in a 20-horse power boiler, built by Morgan, Cable, and Co., Port Chalmers, who also supplied the winch. The engine is one of Marshall's 16-horse power compound (F. R. Manning, agent). All the dredging gear (buckets, ladder, and elevator) was supplied by Messrs. R. S. Sparrow and Co.; the buckets and links by the New Zealand Engineering Company; the driving belts (Dick's) by John Edmond and Co.; the tables and ironwork for the hull by J. W. Faulkner and Co. (Limited); timber for the hull by Murdoch and Co.; labour for the hull by Ritchie and Co.; bolts, galvanised iron, and wire ropes by the New Zealand Hardware Company (Limited); steel tumblers and steel gearing by Fried Krupp, Magdeburgh, Germany. The whole of the machinery and timber was carted from Lawrence by Mr. W. Paul. The plant has been erected by Mr. John Scott, of Port Chalmers, who has carried out his work faithfully and to the complete satisfaction of the designer of the dredge—Mr. Edward Roberts, consulting engineer, Dunedin. Mr. Roberts prepared the whole of the detail drawings and specifications, and superintended the contracts for the company. A record in boiler-making was made of this company's boiler by Morgan, Cable, and Co., who turned it out in three weeks and four days."

The Moa dredge is now working a bank claim at Poverty Beach, adjoining the Golden Beach party's ground, with most excellent results. When the river gets low it is expected that she will experience some difficulty with her tailings, and probably will have to cease working, in which event no doubt she will be removed to her owners' claim higher up the river.