

the size of coarse road-metal by hammers and hammer-headed picks. I am pleased to learn that the washings continue to be eminently satisfactory. I hope, for the sake of the shareholders, that it will continue so to the ending of the claim. Everything about the claim is in first-class order.

*Roxburgh Amalgamated Gold-mining Company.*—(11/6/96): There are three hydraulic plants in position on this claim, but only two were working at the time of my visit, in consequence of an insufficient supply of water. I think the water is frequently a little slack at this time of the year. Since my previous visit the main pipes across the old workings have been shifted up nearer the working-places and covered with sand to prevent as much as possible contraction and expansion, which, however little, sometimes affects the joints and causes trouble and loss of water. The top stripping is well in advance of jets working on the bottom, and the whole of the claim is in splendid working-order.

*Bald Hill Flat.*—(29/4/96): Mr. J. Ewing's sluicing claim: All the sluicing plant is being moved from behind Kemp's Hotel to the lower end of the flat some little distance below the hotel, and is being fixed in position on the west side of the old creek-workings, where it is intended to sluice off a narrow strip of partly-worked ground in order to test the value of the solid terrace, which, if found to be payable, may lead to an important development of sluicing, since there is a very large area of untried hillside of made ground. On this side of the creek in the early days some of the coarsest of the gold on this field was found. I was shown quite a nugget, which was said to have been found near where Ewing is about to commence operations. I think the nugget was found about thirty years ago. The ground in the flat is very shallow, but should payable gold be found in the terrace or hillside the depth of stuff to remove may in time reach 100 ft. or more. The elevation of the head-race is probably from 200 ft. to 320 ft. This plant to work well requires seven heads, which are not always available, and therefore much valuable time is lost.

*The Last Chance Gold-mining Company, Bald Hill Flat.*—(29/4/96): This company has generally about seven heads of water, and the hydraulic plant lifts the *débris* about 27 ft. The ground is comparatively shallow—perhaps 20 ft.—carrying a little gold all through. The pressure head is about 320 ft. In this claim, from time to time, blocks of angular quartz containing large specks of gold have been found, a sure indication of a good reef existing only a short distance up the small stream. This is a most promising place for some quartz prospectors to spend a few weeks or months reef-hunting. The width of flat now being sluiced off is about 2 chains, but a strip of similar width will at some future time be worked on the west side of the present workings.

*Carrol and Lindo's Sluicing Claim, Bald Hill Flat.*—(29/4/96): This party has a hydraulic plant lifting the *débris* about 20 ft. It is working a face probably 3 chains wide. The payable ground is much wider, but cannot conveniently be worked the full width at once, in consequence of the creek, which cannot be disturbed till there is room to turn it through the worked-out ground on the east side of the flat. All the Bald Hill Flat claims have a splendid sandy bottom to work on. There is no gold lost in the washing-up.

*Sew Hoy's Hydraulic-sluicing Claim, Nokomai.*—(20/4/96): The head-race takes its water from Foster's Creek, on the Mataura side of the range, and north-east from Garston probably three miles. The race follows the range south to a saddle opposite the Nokomai railway-siding, and crosses this saddle to the Nokomai side of the range, which it follows to a suitable pipe site near the claim. I could not get any definite information as to length and fall or gradient of race. It was suggested as approximately twelve miles in length. As this gives a very poor supply, and was hardly worth the money expended on it, something more must now be done to increase the supply of water. It is therefore intended at an early date to extend the race upward about five miles to Diggers' Creek. In order to reach the stream in that distance a very long syphon will have to be laid across a depression in the side of the range, for which purpose 40 tons of steel plates have been ordered in London. They are expected to arrive in New Zealand at an early date. At the time of my visit I estimated the quantity of water in the race at twelve heads, which was sufficient to work the smallest of the two plants on the ground. I think there is much of the race that could not with safety carry any more water. I observed at the Nokomai Saddle that the fall in the race was very uneven. The head at the claim is 570 ft. Since the hydraulic started to work—December, 1894—up to date the plant has only worked six months. The expenditure on the claim to date was stated to me to be £9,000. The gold returns to date are very satisfactory. The present mining is at the mouth of a narrow gorge, where the flat is probably from 4 to 6 chains wide, and the depth varies from 25 ft. to over 30 ft., but I cannot say how much over that depth it will be as the work advances. It is generally thought there is deeper ground in the flat ahead, and, I fear, not so good as that now being worked. All the wash is entirely local, as is also the gold—a heavy sample. The schist wash is coarse and flat, easily broken, and hungry-looking stuff. So far most of the gold is found in the fissures in the hard bottom to a depth of from 12 in. to 18 in. Twenty chains or more upward from the present paddock the flat widens out very much, and is not likely to prove payable from side to side—probably a narrow strip only near the centre of the flat. I am told that the wear-and-tear in the plant is not so great as at Roxburgh and the Island Block claims. There is room for several more claims at the Nokomai, and I think it may be possible to get water to the ground at a sufficient elevation to do the work. No doubt some of our enterprising men will shortly visit the locality to see what can be done.

*Nevis Gold-mines.*—(19/4/96): On the west side of the township at the foot of the hill there are two or three hydraulic-sluicing claims working in solid ground where the wash is principally schist, although on the lower side of the vertical white wash, similar to that at St. Bathans, from which I presume most of the fine gold came. A considerable area of ground about the Nevis Township has lately been taken up by several parties of miners and others as dredging claims, and two dredging plants are said to have been ordered, to be delivered on the ground by way of Garston at an early date. The earliest date to do any heavy carting on that road will be next summer, and everything to be carted should be ready and arrangements made for transit before that time. Some of the ground to be worked by dredging was turned over by the miners more than thirty years