

of the range. Rock-drills are used, and good progress is made with them. The tunnel is in some 300 ft., and when completed should enable the company to cut the old line of reef, which some years ago yielded 9 dwt. to the ton, and tests subsequently made showed that nearly three times that quantity was lost in the battery. The main shaft has been sunk a further 100 ft., and driving has been commenced therefrom to meet the tunnel coming from the other side. At this level the shoot of stone which was worked out by the late company in the upper levels and left underfoot should be met with. About thirty men are employed.

Big River Mine (Area, 38 acres).—The main shaft was sunk to a depth of 150 ft., and 200 ft. of driving has been done during the year. A reef discovered on the surface has been opened up, and 200 ft. of driving has been done to intersect the same, and a winze has been sunk 70 ft. on the stone. A 16-horse-power Robey boiler and winding-engine is in use, and a water-power winding-wheel is also available. A ten-head stamper battery and six berdans, driven by a Pelton wheel, have been erected. During the year 2,000 tons of quartz were crushed, the yield from which, by amalgamation, was 1,903 oz. Twenty-eight men are employed.

Lord Edward Mine (Area, 16 acres).—The shaft from which the mine is worked is 450 ft. in depth. Three levels are opened up at 200 ft., 420 ft., and 540 ft. At the latter level a tunnel is being driven a distance of 500 ft. Five men are employed.

GREY DISTRICT.

Blackball Sub-district.

Minerva Mine (Area, 96 acres).—This mine is situated at Blackball, Grey Valley. An incline drive has been put in on the reef, which is about 5 ft. in thickness. The drive is 376 ft. in length, and only a narrow strip of quartz along the drive has been taken out. There is a ten-stamp mill on the claim, driven by water-power. No crushing was done during the year. The quartz is said to be of low grade, and so far has not proved payable. Two men were employed at the time I visited the mine.

Garden Gully Mine (Area, 95 acres).—Mr. G. Perotti, who holds the mine on behalf of the Garden Gully Gold-mining Company, gives the following account of the workings:—

The three auriferous lodes trend north and south, and stand parallel to and within 600 ft. of one another. They have been traced a distance of over 1,000 ft. along the surface. At the surface two of the reefs give prospects that may prove payable, and in one instance very rich stone was obtained. Nothing can be said of their permanency, because very little work has been done yet, owing to the fact that they were discovered only lately. On one lode a tunnel was driven to intersect it at a depth of 100 ft. The formation was cross-cut in the tunnel, but was quite mullocky, consisting of pug, slate, and quartz veins, but not containing payable gold. The claim is situate on a spur of the Paparoa Range, leading to Garden Gully Creek, in Moonlight watershed, and at the head of Black Ball Creek.

The following claims are working on the Paparoa Range, in this locality: Imperial, Sunlight, Golden Crown, Midland, Alpha, and Reward.

In the *Cræsus*, in which five men were working when I was in this district, a winze had been sunk 70 ft. on a gold-bearing reef 2 ft. 6 in. in thickness. A drive was put in 8 ft. to the eastward of the reef, and a leader 6 in. in thickness was cut showing gold freely.

On that portion of the Paparoa Range known as Langdon's a number of special claims have been taken up. The field is not new, large sums of money having been spent in the locality years ago, but nothing payable was then found. Curtis Brothers, the owners of the Victory Mine, have continued stoping in No. 1 level, and have six men employed. They have been sinking a winze in the same level, and have reached a depth of 93 ft. They have also driven a distance of 260 ft. in low level to cut the reef. The number of tons of quartz crushed has been 226, and the yield of gold from the same has been 624 oz.

In the Julian Claim the owners have crushed $12\frac{1}{2}$ tons of stone, yielding 1 oz. $5\frac{1}{2}$ dwt. to the ton.

ROSS DISTRICT.

Prospecting has been carried on in the Captain Russell Claim by Zala and party, and 900 lb. of quartz yielded at the rate of 15 dwt. per ton. The same party also took a parcel of 12 tons of quartz from the United Helvetia, which was treated for 8 oz. of gold. Prospecting was also carried on in the Helvetia by the same party.

CEDAR CREEK.

Alpha Special Claim (Area, 100 acres).—This claim comprises the old William Tell, Republic, Larnach, and other claims. The present owners, the Alpha Special Claim Syndicate (Limited), found rich stone on the surface, but after driving 223 ft. the stone became poor. It was then cut 28 ft. below the outcrop and a winze sunk 26 ft., carrying stone all the way, until the work was stopped on account of water. One ton of quartz yielded 4 oz. 2 dwt.; value, £16 8s. Nine men were employed. It is proposed to erect a battery of five stamps to thoroughly test the stone before putting up a larger battery.

BATTERY RETURNS.

The following statement, compiled from the monthly returns furnished by owners of quartz-crushing machines under section 308 of "The Mining Act, 1891," shows the quantity of stone crushed and the yield of gold from the various mines for year ending the 31st March, 1897:—