

Invincible Mine, Earnslaw (Area, 75 acres).—A considerable amount of work has been done in this mine in development work, and a body of quartz 70 ft. by 13 ft. is exposed. A cyanide plant has been erected, which is kept employed on the tailings accumulated in former years. The mill, which is not at present in use, includes a ten-stamp battery, 800 lb., seven 4 ft. 6 in. berdan pans, one octagonal iron amalgamating-barrel, one shaking-table; cyanide plant consists of one solution-tank, two 25-ton leaching-vats, two extractors, and two sumps. Mill driven by an over-shot water-wheel. Six men are employed at the mine and four at the cyanide plant.

White's Reef (Area, 28 acres).—This mine, which is situated at the Old Man Range, has been steadily worked. The reef varies from 6 in. to 2 ft. The party own a five-stamp battery, driven by water. 236 tons of quartz yielded 270 oz. of gold. Six men were employed.

Excelsior Mine (Area, 100 acres).—This mine is situated on the Old Man Range, near Bald Hill Flat, about 3,000 ft. above sea-level. The shaft has been sunk to a depth of 60 ft., and an adit driven to connect with it 350 ft. in length. The lode is a large body 20 ft. in width, carrying more or less gold throughout, but principally on the two walls. The owner, Mr. F. W. Gray, has a battery of three stamps, driven by water-power. Four men were employed. The property has been placed under option to the New Zealand Minerals Company, who are doing development work, with fair prospects.

Bonanza Quartz-mine, Macrae's Flat (Area, 60 acres).—Three levels have been opened—at 200 ft., 350 ft., and 500 ft. from the surface. The reef varies from 2 ft. to 8 ft. in thickness, the quartz being of a rubbly nature. Two shoots of stone about 400 ft. apart are being worked on. The crushing machinery consists of a Huntington roller-mill, one Dodge rock-breaker, and one Price's pan, all driven by a Pelton wheel. During the year 232 tons of stone was treated, for a return of 219 oz. 12 dwt. Eight men were employed.

Golden Point Mine, Macrae's Flat (Area, 67 acres).—This claim is worked both as an alluvial and quartz claim. The surface consists of peaty soil, with gravel-wash containing boulders, and is ground sluiced by 1½ heads of water under a pressure of 70 ft. A quartz reef varying from 3 ft. to 6 ft. in width is also worked. The battery consists of ten stamps, one 5 ft. roller-mill, one rock-breaker, and two 3 ft. 6 in. grinding-pans driven by a 6 ft. Pelton wheel giving 30-horse power; 300 tons of stone yielded 63 oz. 12 dwt. of gold. Six men were employed.

Barewood District.—The Barewood Quartz-mining Company's properties are now worked by the Anglo-Continental Syndicate, who hold the option of purchase. The reef has been traced two miles and a half, and the company intend to sink two shafts about half a mile apart. It is also intended to drive a long tunnel from the Taieri Valley to drain the country and enable prospecting works to be carried on at a greater depth than has been hitherto practicable on account of the expense of sinking, for which large capital was necessary. During the year 1,192 tons of quartz was treated, for a return of 715 oz. 2 dwt. of gold.

Caledonian Mine (Area, 205 acres; owners, — Orr, H. Piper, Charles Stewart, D. G. Simpson, — Youll, T. C. Simpson).—The land was prospected by trenching and sinking in different places. The reef was discovered on Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, about 3 ft. 6 in. in width, but work has not been commenced. The owners are providing £100 for prospecting purposes in the meantime, and will make further calls of £100 from time to time to continue operations, and if sufficient inducement can then be shown the property will be disposed of in England.

Nenthorn.

Golden Band Mine, Nenthorn (Area, 60 acres).—A shaft has been sunk 60 ft. and an adit put in 200 ft. The reef averages 5 ft. 6 in. between the walls. A battery of five stamps, each of 8 cwt., is driven by water-power. During the year 200 tons of stone was crushed, for a return of £280. Four to six men were employed. The option for flotation of this mine was acquired by a London company twelve months ago. Six months ago it was reported to be sold, but as yet the negotiations have not been completed. This has meantime prevented the working of the mine in a proper manner, as it requires the expenditure of a large sum to open it out at a lower level. It also requires suitable gold-saving plant, as owing to the fineness of the gold and pyritic nature of the stone about 50 per cent. of the gold is lost by the usual method of amalgamation.

Prospecting operations have been carried on in several other claims in this district, but no returns have been recorded.

Preservation Inlet.

The attention of miners is being yearly more directed to the Preservation Inlet district, and there is every indication that in the near future a prosperous mining field will be opened up. As it was impossible for me to visit the district, I am indebted to a gentleman of considerable mining experience who was on the ground during the year for the following particulars. A considerable revival has taken place here owing to the rich quartz found in the Morning Star property, the mine at the present time employing upwards of seventy men. There is now a large settlement, with two stores and a post-office, at what was known as Long Beach, now Te Oneroa.

The Morning Star Gold-mining Company's mine, at Te Oneroa, is still continuing to return satisfactory dividends to the shareholders, the total yield of gold since the commencement of operations being valued at some £20,000. The returns for the year ending the 31st March show that 3,140 tons of stone was crushed, for a yield of 3,420 oz. 14 dwt. of gold, valued at £4 2s. per ounce. The quality of the gold won is of high character, the assay returns from the Melbourne Mint showing a grade of over 23 carats. Ten new berdans have been erected during the year, and the mine machinery generally is in excellent order. The wharf, on which a Government subsidy of £120 has been received, is now completed, giving a depth at low water of 15 ft., thus affording greater facilities for the reception of coal-steamers.

The Alpha Gold-mining Company has been formed to work what has been known as the Longney's Claim. There are several outcrops of quartz on the property, from some of which very fair prospects have been obtained, but for the past year little work has been done.