

Garden Gully Gold-mining Company (W. G. Mouat, Mine-manager).—Operations have been confined to driving north 75 ft., and south 75 ft. on the line of reef, and rising 15 ft. from level No. 1, to connect (and effect ventilation) with No. 2, the ventilation being now supplied by fan driven by water-power, which will be further assisted by water-blast. To increase the carrying-capacity of the tramway it is being reconstructed, and a wider rail-gauge adopted. The various works in connection with the erection of a battery are in active progress. These include the construction of water-races, hoppers, and other necessary works, but when the mine was inspected the company had not decided on the purchase of the battery plant.

Wilberforce.—This quartz-body was formerly reported on, and a company formed to develop it about twenty years ago. At that time samples to the extent of 4 tons were taken from the reef and treated, but the results obtained cannot now be given with any degree of certainty, there being no reliable information available respecting the true values. The stone, 60 ft. in length and 15 ft. in width, outcrops about 500 ft. from the cap of the range, and one mile northward from Browning's Pass, and, with the exception of securing samples, nothing has been done on this property for many years. A low-level tunnel had been driven westward to intersect the reef, but as it is now practically closed, ingress is quite impossible. If future developments prove the existence of this large ore-body to be continuous, water for motive power and other purposes can be easily obtained, as can also a suitable battery-site, but scarcity of timber for mining may be considered a serious hindrance. Road-construction is completed from Glentunnel Railway-station (on the Canterbury side of the main range) to within 5 chains of the proposed battery-site, and with an additional expenditure of £200, the 5-chain section could be made servicable for wheeled traffic.

GENERAL REMARKS.

In comparing the bullion-values earned for the year under review against the year 1903, there is an increase of £18,714 7s. 8d. in favour of Reefton and Lyell, whilst the total increase earned over the whole inspection district was £13,599 4s. 7d. This fall of £5,115 3s. 1d. in the gross earnings of other portions of the district is chiefly due to depreciation of output from the Golden Ridge (Taitapu Estates), the Inglewood, Inkerman, Alpine Extended, and Big River being responsible for the increase in favour of Reefton.

Notwithstanding that the earnings from the Progress Mines are the highest yet recorded for any yearly period, the gross earnings from the whole system under the control of the Progress Mines and Consolidated Goldfields show a decrease of £805 15s. 8d. This decrease is attributed to suspension of operations at the Welcome Mine. Guided by the advanced state of the developments in progress, the general aspect of the mining-field compares favourably with former years, and continuance of profitable values and efficiency in operations are fairly assured.

HYDRAULIC AND ALLUVIAL MINING.

MAHAKIPAWA.

King Solomon Syndicate.—The intermediate shaft has been sunk to the 86 ft. level, and connection completed with the Old King Solomon shaft workings, but owing to the excessive soakage percolating through the open strata underlying the creek-bed the 6 in. pumps were overpowered, and this necessitated suspension of operations on the 86 ft. level. However, in view of reducing the heavy inflow of water, the work of fluming the creek was commenced from the Hibernian shaft, and continued past the Intermediate. This work is now completed, but the work done has, so far, failed to unwater the deep levels. Meanwhile operations are confined to driving on a false bottom on the 40 ft. level, with the expectation of picking up the Hibernian lead. The workings are securely timbered, and in good order.

In the Mahakipawa Valley, Harris and party (three men) were successful in their last wash-up in obtaining three nuggets, 1 oz., 2·5 oz., and 3 oz. in weight respectively, but their good luck did not give wages.

Coady and party (two men) continue to work on the river-bed with varied results, while further up the creek Morton, Nelson, Coombes, and Rochfort are fossicking.

King and party (two men) continue to trench for reefs on the dividing-range, the results being confined to small leaders.

Wakamarina and Deep Creek.—Joseph Styx and party (four men) are carrying out a system of diving to clean out the deep holes in the creek-bed. When last visited, work was suspended awaiting slight repairs to the diving-dress, and one of the party informed the Assistant Inspector that at low water sufficient gold was won from the crevices to pay more than current wages.

Mr. Delamannte, caretaker at the Gorge Claim, is still hopeful that sufficient capital will yet be available to clean out the gorge.

Caines and party continue to prospect a branch of the Deep Creek, with satisfactory results. The gold gives a coarse sample.

Davis and party (four men) are now doing very well after a lengthened spell of rather indifferent success.

Charles Nelson and party (four men) are engaged bringing in a water-race from the All Nations, a distance of two miles, to sluice a district known as the Sydney Flat.

At the commencement of the year the creek was very low, and quite a number of miners were carrying out a system of clearing out the crevices. Some nice nuggets are picked up at times.

Onamalutu District.—Smith and party (five men) are bringing in a water-race to work some ground which they formerly opened about two years ago. The party are satisfied that with the prospects