

CHARLESTON.

Charleston Beach Sluicing Company.—Operations have been somewhat irregular during the year. When the claim was recently inspected two men were employed on each shift. The sands operated on do not appear to be rich.

Powell's Sluicing and Elevating Claim.—Operations continue to be persistently and systematically carried on. The plant and other details of the property are kept in thorough working-condition. When recently visited there was no person on the claim, the party being engaged effecting repairs on the water-race.

Argyle Water-race is let to Walsh and party for a period of twelve months. Recently, the lower valve leading from the dam to Deep Creek was obstructed, but by the prompt action of the County Engineer in securing the services of a diving party the obstruction was removed. In order to effect a more efficient distribution of the water-supply, 15 chains of fluming are required, at a cost of £10 per chain, which cost is considered by the County Council to exceed their total revenue derived from the district or the rental received from the lessee. With the probable advantages to be gained on completion of the proposed work, it is considered the increased effectiveness of the water-supply would then be sufficient to give employment to an additional twenty miners.

Mining in the Charleston district seems to have experienced revival of late, both as regards sluicing and cement-crushing, thirty miners being actually employed. Morris and party have just completed a new hydraulic elevator, while Higgins and party have just completed the erection of a small battery for cement-crushing, and Walsh and party are opening out a sluicing claim on a branch of the Nile.

MURCHISON.

Maruia Sluicing Claim.—Since this property was opened for mining purposes dearth of water has been a decided drawback to developments. The ground being proved of a favourable character, the company are now considering the advisability of constructing a permanent water-supply at a calculated cost of £6,000. Meanwhile, sluicing operations are confined to a deposit of recent formation, located in a small gully. The gold won is fine, and is deposited chiefly on the sides and bottom.

Morris Brothers continue to sluice further down the Matakita River with success.

Thomson and party (three men) have made satisfactory progress towards the construction of their new water-race, a length of a mile and a half being completed. The total completed length will be three miles. During the recent heavy rainfall the party had a very nice wash-up.

Six-mile Hydraulic Sluicing Company (Matakita River. T. Maine, Manager).—The gravels operated on yield profitable results, but the intermittent water-supply (practically supported by rainfall) is the chief drawback. Three men employed. The various works are in good order.

Horse Terrace Sluicing Company (C. Belby, Manager).—Prior to this company acquiring possession, the ground was formerly worked by small parties, who, being unable to raise sufficient capital to effect profitable development, willingly sold out, although they were confident that high auriferous values existed in the property. During the limited period (six months) during which the company has been actively engaged, 230 chains of water-race have been constructed to a width of 6 ft. by 4 ft. in depth, with a supply-capacity of 35 heads of water. Connecting with the race is a 22-in.-pipe line, laid for a length of 800 ft., and junctioned with two main branch lines of 350 ft., while each branch is fitted with 7 in. delivery Giant nozzles. It is further contemplated, in view of running the works continuously night and day, to instal electric light over the whole system. Timber is also sawn by the company's own plant, thus effecting considerable saving in the various developments.

Hunt's Freehold, recently purchased by a Wellington syndicate, has been prospected with such satisfactory results that detailed surveys were made and rights acquired for water-race construction on a large scale.

A Wellington company has employed Evan Brothers to prospect a section of auriferous ground located in the central Buller, prior to permanent works being undertaken.

New Lyell Sluicing Company (Thornhill Cooper, Mine-manager).—Since this company acquired possession of this property (formerly owned and worked under the title of the Lyell Hydraulic Sluicing Company), operations have been confined to the construction of a high-level water-race, and extending preparatory works to open a new face at a lower level of the river, so as to enable sluicing to be commenced from the lowest level of the ground, and at the same time admit of a tail-race with sufficient fall to carry away tailings from the sluicing of the gravels on the higher levels without hindrance to future operations.

New Creek Syndicate.—Work has been confined to the operations of one man, who was employed in carrying out a system of surface trenching with a view to picking up the quartz outcrop which shed the rich stone now found on the surface. The results have been so far unfruitful.

Newton River Sluicing Company.—This company having expended £6,000 in water-race and tail-race construction, general equipment, and electric-light installation, a lucrative and well-ordered property has been established. In order to concentrate operations the main road was deviated for a distance of 23 chains, and the grades are much reduced as compared with those on the old road.

BOATMAN'S.

Apart from the dredging industry, alluvial mining is confined to a few old pensioners, who do a little fossicking at their leisure.