

(d.) REPORTS OF WATER-RACE MANAGERS.

Mr. JAMES ROCHFORD, Manager of the Waimea-Kumara Water-races, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

Kumara, 27th April, 1908.

I have the honour to forward the following report on the working of the Waimea-Kumara Water-races for the financial year ending the 31st March, 1908.

WAIMEA RACE.

The cash received for sales of water from this race for the year ending the 31st March, 1908, was £637 1s. 7d., and the expenditure on gauging, maintenance, and repairs for the same period amounted to £592 18s. 5d., showing a credit balance of £44 3s. 2d. on the year's transactions.

The average number of miners supplied with water from the race for sluicing purposes during the year was 29.41, showing an increase of 3.66 as compared with the previous year; and the approximate quantity of gold obtained by them was 1,903 oz., having a value of £7,421 14s.

The total sales of water for the year amounted to £652 7s. 3d., or £108 7s. 2d. more than the previous year; and the quantity of gold obtained was approximately 277 oz. more than the preceding year, representing an increase in value of £1,080 6s.

The cash received for sales of water was £80 12s. 10d. more than during the previous year. The expenditure on gauging, maintenance, and repairs was £29 2s. 7d. less than during the preceding year, and the head works at Wainihinihi and Kawhaka, and the Waimea siphon and tunnels, and the main and branch races have been maintained, and are now in good working-order.

The revenue derived from the Stafford section of the race shows an increase of £31 1s. over the previous year; and, as there is still a considerable area of unworked ground in the locality that will pay fair wages, I do not anticipate any falling off in revenue for some time to come.

At Tunnel Terrace six parties have been taking water from the race throughout the year, with satisfactory results. There is still a large area of payable ground in this locality, and I am satisfied that the sales of water for the ensuing year from this section will show a still further improvement.

The tributers of the Waimea Hydraulic-sluicing Company worked steadily throughout the year, and have paid £115 7s. 3d. for water since the Waimea Water-race was extended along Tunnel Terrace Hill. Mitchell and party have also taken advantage of the extension by laying a line of 13 in. iron piping from it to their claim, which could not otherwise have been worked with payable results. As the total cost of the extension was only £147, the result is highly satisfactory so far, and fully bears out my report of the 4th September, 1906.

The party of Chinamen at Red Jack's are still taking water from the race, and, as far as I can learn, the ground being worked by them is highly payable.

The water was off ten days during the year through breaks in the race. A great number of sets of timber have been put in the tunnels, and they are now in much better order than they have been for years past; but the high flumings at Fox's and Greek's, which were erected over thirty-one years ago, are in a very decayed condition.

There was no scarcity of water during the year.

Authorised free water to the amount of £3 17s. 4d. was supplied from this race during the year.

The following is a summary showing the revenue and expenditure in regard to this race for the financial year ended 31st March, 1908:—

	£	s.	d.
Sales of water	652	7	3
Cash received	637	1	7
Expenditure	592	18	5
Approximate value of gold obtained	7,421	14	0

Average number of men employed, 29.41.

Branch Race to Callaghan's and Middle Branch of Waimea Creek.

The cash received for sales of water from this race for the year ending the 31st March, 1908, was £484 3s. 10d., and the expenditure for the same period on gauging, maintenance, and repairs was £700 11s. 6d., showing a debit balance of £216 7s. 8d. on the year's transactions.

The average number of miners supplied with water for sluicing purposes from this race during the year was 8.16, a decrease of 3.59 as compared with last year; and the approximate quantity of gold obtained by them was 1,192 oz., having a value of £4,648 16s.

The total sales of water for the year amounted to £471 8s. 8d., a decrease of £209 12s. 10d. on the preceding year, and the cash received for sales of water showed a decrease of £245 4s. 10d.

The approximate quantity of gold obtained by the miners was 539 oz. less than during the preceding year, representing a decrease in value of £2,102 2s. The expenditure on gauging, maintenance, and repairs was £36 10s. 4d. greater than the previous year.

The falling-off in the sales of water from this race is accounted for by the fact that only two parties sluiced into the Waimea Main Tail-race for five months of the year. McIlroy and party did very little sluicing during the year, but they expended a considerable sum of money in prospecting their claim by means of tunnels driven from the Waimea Main Tail-race. When these tunnels were driven, it was found that the richest wash was too low to be sluiced into the Main Tail-race, and, as they had no other means of working the ground, they were reluctantly compelled to abandon it altogether. This makes the third claim at Middle Branch Flat that has been abandoned for want of fall. Had the Waimea Main Tail-race been driven on a level some 8 ft. or 10 ft. lower, the whole of this ground would have paid fair wages, and these three claims would have still been working.