

Ross United Company.—This company is now working the ground above the 100ft. level in Ross Flat by tributers. Those working from shafts pay the company 10 per cent. of the gross yield of the gold. The two elevator claims—one in Ross Flat and the other at Donoghue's—are worked also by tributers, who pay the company 35 per cent. of the gross yield. The total value of gold obtained from this company's ground last year was £6,171 14s. 6d.—namely, Ross elevator claim, £1,593 19s. 6d.; Donoghue's £1,724 16s. 6d.; from deep workings previous to stoppage, £753 13s. 6d.; and from tributers working from shafts above the 100ft. level, £2,099 5s. The total received from tributers last year was £1,327 0s. 6d.: this, added to the value of the gold taken from the deep workings, and £183 4s., makes the total income from this company's mine last year £2,263 18s.; while the actual expenditure in carrying on operations was, exclusive of general management, directors' fees, &c., £1,961 11s. 10d. The company intend to work the deep levels again as soon as they have machinery that is capable of overcoming the water; but as the whole of the capital is now called up they cannot undertake new works which are estimated to cost about £20,000—that is, to erect more powerful pumping-machinery, and bring in an increased water-supply from the Totara and Mikonui Rivers. Negotiations are in train for obtaining the additional capital by either reorganizing the company or issuing preference shares, but so far nothing has been done.

Mont d'Or Company.—This company was formed in 1882, with a capital of £12,000, of which £10,899 has been paid up. The company has been carrying on hydraulic-sluicing operations continuously. It took a long time to get the claim in working order, and to construct a head-race to bring in a water-supply. This claim has been worked since 1875, but at that time it was held by private individuals. The money shown as capital paid represents the total expenditure since the claim was first taken up. Of late years this claim has given the shareholders very good returns, and is likely to continue to do so for some years. The total amount of dividends paid up to the end of last year was £8,400.

Mount Greenland Company.—This company was formed in 1878, with a capital of £10,000, the whole of which is paid up. Their ground adjoins the Mount d'Or claim, and they have still a large area of auriferous drift to wash. This claim was first taken up about 1873, and a co-operative company formed—one half-paying in and the other half working-shareholders. They constructed a water-race at a high elevation from small creeks leading from Mount Greenland to the Mikonui River, and also a dam on a flat ridge near the head of the Sandinavian Creek. The ground at present worked by the company is upwards of 200ft. in depth, but the limited supply of water at their command makes but little impression on it for twelve months' work. Dividends to the amount of £7,260 have been paid up to the end of last year.

Cedar Creek Reefs.—Auriferous quartz was found in the bed of Cedar Creek about three years ago, and a rush for ground set in; but after prospecting for some time all the claims were abandoned. During last year prospecting was carried on by the William Tell Company, when a payable lode was discovered in an adit-level 57ft. below the cap of the reef, where it was originally found in the bed of the creek. The adit was carried on for 229ft. on the course of the lode; about 200ft. of this was found to contain sufficient gold to pay for working. At the easterly end of this lode the quartz almost pinches out; but on the western end the reef is about 4ft. wide, with gold fairly distributed through the stone.

A winze has been sunk on the lode for 76ft., at about 84ft. distant from the western end of the adit. There was about 50ft. of water in this winze at the time of my visit, so that I could not see the stone in the bottom, but the portion of the lode in the winze I could examine showed gold freely. The lode, however, is a little broken in the winze in one place; but it is said to be more compact near the bottom. To take this lode on the whole, as far as I could examine it, it is likely to yield about 1oz. of gold to the ton, and it varies from 1ft. to 5ft. in thickness. Another adit level, 86ft. lower than the present workings, is in course of construction; 154ft. of it was completed at the time of my visit, and it was expected to go another 250ft. before it cut the reef. When this adit cuts the lode far more will be learned as to its quality and permanency. About 200ft. below this level a low-level tunnel or adit was constructed with subsidy from this department for a distance of 1,000ft. This adit goes through a country in which auriferous lodes are likely to be found. A block of stone or reef was cut through at about 800ft. from the mouth, but there is very little gold to be found in it. Several small leaders have been cut through further in, which contain a little gold. The appearance of the country rock at the extreme end of this adit leads me to think that another quartz lode will be cut at no great distance. I have not seen any true lodes in this locality; the reefs are all in the form of segregated veins.

Swiss Republic Company.—This company's ground adjoins the William Tell, and has a parallel reef running through it. Operations at the present time are confined to prospecting the reef at the side of Cedar Creek, which shows on the outcrop a width of 3ft. A little gold is found in the stone, but I should not deem it at present payable for working. There is no prospecting being done of any account on this reef, and therefore nothing can be said as to the probabilities of finding a payable lode.

Since the discovery of payable stone in the William Tell Company's ground, licensed holdings have been applied for and granted for a considerable area of country; and I was informed very good specimens can be got from the lodes passing through several claims. These quartz reefs will yet take a considerable time before they are developed, as there is no road yet constructed whereby machinery can be brought on the ground.

MAEREWHENUA DISTRICT.

This is a district where there is a considerable area of auriferous ground that would pay for working by hydraulic sluicing if there was a good supply of water, but there is very little water available at the present time. Several small water-races are constructed, but if the water in the whole of them were put together it would only be sufficient for carrying on hydraulic-sluicing operations on an extensive scale for about two claims.