

the ocean, and assist in keeping up the supply of gold on the beaches along the coast-line, it is natural to suppose that gold is to be found back into the ranges; but, with the exception of a few places near the gold-mining centres of Kumara, Waimea, Kanieri, and Ross, scarcely any prospecting has yet been done outside of about four miles back from the coast-line. The total quantity of gold obtained in the Westland District last year was 36,597oz., representing a value of £146,349.

#### KUMARA.

Kumara is the largest mining centre in the Westland District, and one from which nearly one-third of the gold was obtained last year; and yet the mining claims from which this quantity of gold was obtained do not exceed an aggregate area of 800 acres, all lying within a radius of about a mile. The total quantity of gold, as nearly as can be ascertained, that was obtained from this field last year was about 11,530oz., representing a value of £44,965. The total value of the gold obtained from this field since it was first opened, about sixteen years ago, is about £1,199,000, and there is not more than about 600 acres of ground yet worked, which shows that the value of the ground worked was about £1,998 per acre. The whole of the gold obtained from this field is on a false bottom; and during last year a shaft was sunk to the blue-reef bottom, which showed that there was an auriferous layer of wash-drift lying on it; but so far it has not yet been proved as to what area this layer of drift will extend over, or whether there are not rich leads or runs of gold-bearing wash occurring in different places over the flat, similar to those found on the upper levels. If this should prove to be the case, it would give a new life to this field, and cause more attention to be directed to prospecting the deep levels at the Greenstone and other places in the Westland District, where the gold is obtained on auriferous layers of drift lying on a false or gravel bottom. As there was a considerable quantity of water to contend with in sinking the prospecting-shaft, it is now contemplated to construct a drainage-tunnel from the edge of the terrace facing the Teremakau River. This will not only serve the purpose of prospecting the flat on the deep levels, but it will afterwards drain the ground, and allow claims to be worked from shafts, should payable gold be struck. It is further proposed to subsidise a main tail-race, which will enable ground to be worked below that which the present main tail-race commands, thus furthering the produce of gold and increasing the sales of water from the Government race, &c.

#### WAIMEA AND CALLAGHAN'S.

The ground in the vicinity of Waimea is becoming more difficult to work year by year, owing to the bed of the creek getting filled up with tailings, and the tail-races being gradually lengthened as the ground is worked back from the creek-bed. This necessitates giving less fall to the sluices, and consequently the same quantity of material cannot be sluiced away as formerly unless a large quantity of water is used; and the miners find that the ground is not sufficiently rich to pay for a large supply of water. There is a considerable area of auriferous ground in the valley of the middle branch of the Waimea Creek, but the present water-supply does not command it. As the miners on this field are entirely dependent on a supply of water to work the ground, it has been deemed desirable to construct a branch water-race from the main supply-race to work this ground, so that the whole of the water from the supply can be profitably utilised by the extension race to Callaghan's.

#### HUMPHREY'S GULLY.

A great depth of auriferous drifts, extending over a large area on the south side of the Arahura River, is held by the Humphrey's Gully Company, which ought to be made a valuable mining property if worked systematically by hydraulic sluicing with a good supply of water. It is to be regretted that the working of this ground in the past has not proved a remunerative investment for the very large sum expended on the property. One of the finest water-supplies in the colony can be got from the Arahura River to command this ground at a comparatively small cost. Instead, however, of directing their efforts towards obtaining a supply from this source, the company have frittered away more money than it would have cost to have obtained practically an unlimited and never-failing supply from the river in question. During last year, with the intermittent and limited supply of water, they obtained 720oz. gold out of a portion of the sluices, representing a value of £2,809, and they estimate that there was still 200oz. left in the sluices, which were not washed down. This quantity of gold was obtained in 471 shifts, which is equal to 157 days' work.