

MAEREWHENUA.

Notwithstanding the Proclamation declaring the Macrewhenua River a channel for the deposit of tailings, so as to allow the miners to work the ground, there was a decrease in the yield of gold last year from this field, and, until there is an additional supply of water brought on to command the ground, there is very little probability of the yield of gold increasing in future years to any great extent. Last year 1,796oz. of gold was obtained, representing a value of £7,355. A small water-supply is at present being constructed from one of the branches of the Macrewhenua River by the Mountain Hut Water-race Company; but this water-race will not largely augment the present supply on the field.

MOUNT IDA.

The auriferous drifts found at Maerewhenua extend over the range to Kyeburn, Mount Buster, and the Mount Ida goldfield; although on the latter field very little of the fine quartz-drift found at Maerewhenua and Mount Buster has been worked. Most of the gold obtained from the Mount Ida field is from more recent deposits than the quartz-drift referred to. The prospecting-shaft sunk in the bottom of the Hogburn Gully showed that there is an auriferous quartz-drift deposit underlying the "Old Man" or "Maori" bottom; also in the valley of the Eweburn, where a bore-hole was recently put down to a depth of 650ft., with the view of finding artesian water. This bore went through a body of quartz-drift before reaching a depth of 575ft., in which the colour of gold was seen. There is a considerable area of ground on this field, containing the older drifts, and also the more recent deposits; and when these older drifts can be traced here and there on the surface, from Mount Buster to St. Bathans, and round the foot of the Dunstan Range to Clyde, there is little doubt that further discoveries will be made and fresh ground opened up. During last year there was 10,779oz. of gold obtained from the Mount Ida District, including Kyeburn, Mount Buster, and St. Bathans, representing a value of £43,528.

ST. BATHAN'S.

St. Bathans is a portion of the Mount Ida District deserving of special notice, as its basin contains a great thickness of the same old quartz-drift which is found on the top of Mount Buster, containing in some places a great deal of gold. It has not yet been satisfactorily determined from whence this deposit came, nor the direction of the current of water which brought it to its present position. It is evident that this drift has been deposited by water, inasmuch as amongst it there is a bed of about 5ft. in thickness consisting of leaves of trees, which is now tilted at the same angle as the drift in which it lies. Great depths of this deposit have been sluiced away in the ordinary manner; and at present, in Mr. Ewing's claim, the material is lifted about 80ft. with hydraulic elevators, by the aid of which 800oz. of gold was obtained for the last season's work, with five men employed. Mr. Ewing states that the quantity of gold in this deposit seems to increase, if anything, as it goes down. Gold was first discovered here in 1863, and since then over 100,000oz. have been obtained from this basin and its surroundings. Not more than 200 acres of the ground appears to have been yet worked.

TINKER'S.

The richest field in Otago for the number of miners employed is Tinker's. There are only a few claims being worked, as the whole of the water-rights in the locality are held by the owners of these claims, and is fully utilised unless in times of freshes. There is a large extent of auriferous ground to work in this locality; but, unless by reservoirs being constructed to conserve the water in time of floods, and during wet weather, there is no possibility of bringing water to command any of the ground at a reasonable cost. The quantity of gold obtained for last season's work was about 1,500oz.

TUAPEKA.

The old diggings in the vicinity of Tuapeka, Gabriel's, Weatherstone's, and Munro's Gullies are getting worked out. Were it not for the Blue Spur Company and the Local Industry Syndicate there would be very few European miners now working in any of the gullies and creek-beds. The Blue Spur Company having purchased and leased most of the available water in the locality, no one else can test the ground. They therefore hold the key to all the available ground that their water-supplies command. It is gratifying to learn that this company—which is formed principally by English capitalists—carried on their mining