

A great revival in mining has taken place in this district during the past twelve months. This was brought about by the arrival of Mr. David Ziman, the well-known mining speculator, from Johannesburg. His advent marks a new era in the history of mining in this district. Mr. Ziman, impressed with what he saw, and recognising the great capabilities and value of the district, made several applications for special claims in various parts of it. He then purchased the old Fiery Cross and Hopeful special claims. Afterwards he made offers to the several companies and mine-owners for the option to purchase the Globe, Progress, Wealth of Nations, Welcome, Royal, Golden Fleece, Energy, New Low-level Tunnel, and other properties. His offers were accepted, the right to purchase extending over a period of six months, a substantial deposit being paid in each case. Mr. Ziman then proceeded to London, and succeeded there in forming a powerful syndicate, composed of a number of the leading financiers. This syndicate is now known as the Consolidated Goldfields of New Zealand (Limited), and has a capital of £250,000, Mr. David Ziman being the managing director. This syndicate took over Mr. Ziman's options, the whole of which have been exercised. In the cases of the Globe, Progress, Wealth of Nations, and Welcome Companies, new companies are to be formed to work the mines mentioned, and, possibly, adjoining ground, the old shareholders being able to participate or take up shares in the new companies according to the number of shares held by them in the old ones. Since taking possession of the several properties, the Consolidated Company have been energetically at work in retimbering old workings, securing the ground, prospecting, and generally developing the mines. The New Zealand office of the company is in Reefton, Mr. Boyd, late manager of the Bank of New Zealand at Greymouth, being in charge. The company have secured an efficient engineering and survey staff, Mr. P. L. Foster, late of Colorado, being chief engineer, and Mr. Pearce, late of Colorado, assistant. Mr. Evans, late of Denver, is assayer. Mr. Brett, surveyor, of Greymouth, is now engaged surveying and laying off various works in different mines. It is the intention of the company to introduce air-compressors and rock-drills, so that the work in the mines may proceed with the utmost speed, and also to erect the very latest and most approved milling plant and gold-saving appliances. In the meantime, the works in the various mines will be pushed on, and the mines developed in such a manner as to keep them well in advance of the reduction-works; and every effort will be made to keep these constantly going. Generally, as plans are formulated, work will be started on all the other properties held by the company, and I am informed they expect to have not less than a thousand men at work within twelve months' time.

I submit for your information the following account of the work done by the principal companies in the district during the past twelve months, and some indications of future operations:—

DEVIL'S CREEK.

Progress.—During the year the stoping of stone between Nos. 5 and 4 levels has been continued, and 50ft. still remains to be stoped before reaching No. 4 level. This block of stone averages about 95ft. in length, and varies from 3ft. to 45ft. in width. A winze has been sunk on the reef from No. 5 level to a depth of 175ft., carrying a strong body of stone all the way down. For the purposes of opening up No. 6 level the main shaft has been sunk a further depth of 145ft. The work at present being carried on is as follows: No. 2 level is being driven to the east to prospect 600ft. of virgin country between this mine and the Globe, and a pass constructed to open out a known body of stone on this level. Drives and cross-cuts are also being pushed on to develop the adjoining special claims—viz., the Progressive, Rose, and Ballance, it being considered more desirable to develop these properties at once at a low-level than to work from the surface. This will not only prove the ground at a depth, but will probably lead to early developments of this well-known rich district. During the year the company have crushed 8,640 tons of stone, from which 3,914oz. of gold have been obtained, representing a value of £15,830, out of which £6,000 has been given in dividends. The total output of the mine is 60,235 tons of quartz, which yielded 28,185oz. of gold, valued at £113,145, out of which shareholders obtained £23,400 in dividends.

Globe.—The No. 5 level has been extended 230ft. east, the first 50ft. on stone, which was of an average width of 6ft. An intermediate level of 40ft. was opened on this block, and worked up to No. 5 level. A winze has been sunk on this block, and is now down to a depth of 175ft. from No. 5 level, and a reef of splendid quality was followed the whole distance, a cross-cut in it proving it to be about 7ft. wide. Another 100ft. remains to be sunk, and a cross-cut is being put in to cut the stone on No. 6 level. No. 5 level was driven another 50ft. in blank country, when another block was found, which has been driven on 130ft. and stoped up 40ft. over the level. This stone will average about 6ft. in width, and is of fair quality. Driving is being pushed on easterly to cut the old Union Reef. No. 6 level is being driven both east and west. In the west end the reef has been driven on 150ft. into the Progress ground, making the total length of the block 330ft., and stone still continuing in the face. This is a very large body of stone, and will average from 10ft. to 12ft. in width. In the east end the reef has gone into the wall, but a cross-cut is being driven to pick it up. A survey is being made of the surface and workings to fix the site for a main shaft to work the whole of the company's ground. It is proposed to sink this main shaft to a depth of 2,000ft., and connect the Larnach and Carroll special claims with it, and thoroughly prospect these properties at low levels. No time will be lost in pushing on this work, and all the necessary machinery will shortly arrive. During the year the company have crushed 3,750 tons of quartz, obtaining 1,502oz. of gold therefrom, valued at £6,026, out of which a dividend of £900 was declared. The total output of the mine is 75,558 tons of stone, yielding 35,823oz. of gold, valued at £142,201, and dividends to the extent of £40,900 have been given.

MURRAY CREEK AND CRUSHINGTON.

Wealth of Nations.—During the year the 500ft. or lowest level has been connected with the winze, which was sunk on the reef from the 350ft. level, and the quartz stoped out to a height of