

race is thirty-five heads, and the siphon will deliver the water at the claim under a pressure of 600 ft. It is intended to work the claim continuously in eight-hour shifts, and an electric-light installation will be effected to enable this mode of working to be carried out.

The Inverness Gold-mining Company are having a race surveyed from Deadman's Creek, in this vicinity, with a capacity of 100 heads and a pressure of 500 ft., to work their special claim of 100 acres. Near Barrytown there are several terrace sluicing-claims, chiefly formed of angular glacial drifts, containing payable gold. These claims have been worked for years, paying wages. A plentiful supply of water should render them remunerative.

The miners generally in this portion of my district appear to be doing better than in former years; the number of men on the field has increased, and a much more hopeful tone prevails.

At *Coal Creek*, north of Greymouth, Gifford and party have taken up a licensed holding of 20 acres of alluvial sluicing-ground, worked by means of a small head-race from Fiji Creek, and it promises to pay wages.

At *Maori Gully* there are about one hundred and forty Europeans and one hundred Chinese at work, earning bare wages. The proposal referred to in my last report to form an association for prospecting purposes unfortunately fell through, and I have nothing new to relate. The population remains about the same.

#### QUARTZ-MINING.

On that portion of the Paparoa Range known as Langdon's a number of special claims have been taken up since my last report. The field is not new, large sums of money having been spent in the locality fifteen years ago, but nothing payable was then found. Curtis Brothers, the owners of the Victory Mine, have continued stoping in No. 1 level, and have six men employed. They have been sinking a winze in the same level, and have reached a depth of 93 ft. They have also driven a distance of 260 ft. in low level to cut the reef. The number of tons of quartz crushed has been 258, and the yield of gold from the same has been 745 oz. 2 dwts. The gold is valued at £4 1s. 2d. per ounce.

In the Julian Claim the owners have crushed 12½ tons of stone, yielding 1 oz. 5½ dwts. to the ton.

Gold has recently been found in the Kanui, Paparoa, and other claims, but they are not sufficiently developed to allow an opinion to be expressed as to their merits.

#### COAL-MINING AND TIMBER.

The Greymouth-Point Elizabeth Railway and Coal Company have completed over three miles of their railway formation work from Greymouth to their mine at Seven-mile, and it is estimated that it will take another five months to complete the same. The bridge over the Grey River connecting the company's line with Greymouth was put in hand in May last, but delays in the delivery of ironbark piles prevented the commencement of actual operations until October. The flood of the 9th March last caused the company considerable loss, the whole of their pile-driving plant and 150 ft. of staging having been swept down the river. The permanent piers, however, successfully stood the test of the flood, which was the heaviest on record but one—viz., that of 1887. The company hope to have the bridge completed in August. Although active operations are not yet commenced in the Coal Creek mine itself, extensive surface surveys have been made, and a number of miners are engaged in preliminary work. This company still draws its supply of coal from the Brunner mines, which continue in active operation, the output for the year being 90,155 tons.

*Blackball Company.*—The output of coal from this company's mine during the year has been about 49,000 tons; the partial destruction of their aerial tramway during the big flood having delayed operations.

*Timber.*—I am pleased to say the export of timber from Greymouth has largely increased. During the past year the following quantities have been shipped: New Zealand ports, 6,461,786 ft.; foreign ports, 2,492,270 ft.: total, 8,954,056 ft. In addition to this quantity, 69,157 sleepers (1,607,900 ft.) have been exported.

Return of cases disposed of in the Magistrate's and Warden's Courts at Greymouth for the year ending the 31st March, 1897: Civil, 179; criminal, 258; Warden's, 18.

The revenue for the year amounted to £2,600 4s. 8d., made up as follows: Warden's department, £2,347 2s. 8d.; Magistrate's department, £203 5s.; licensing fees, £49 17s.: total, £2,600 4s. 8d.

Particulars of revenue collected in the Warden's Court, Greymouth, for the year ending 31st March, 1897:—

	£	s.	d.
Miners' rights	368	11	0
Water-races	30	12	6
Registrations	25	0	0
Rents	1,191	10	6
Fees and fines	15	9	0
Miscellaneous	715	19	8
	£2,347	2	8

Number of applications lodged during the above-named period, 389.

#### AHAURA DIVISION.

*Blackball.*—The population of this district has increased during the last twelve months, and mining generally in the locality has been active. Fifty-five special claims have been granted during the year, but beyond the applicants paying the first half year's rent, doing a little