

structed, the quantity of gold produced by the two former during the past year—viz., 2,767 oz.—goes to show that the modern dredge is manipulating more stuff than the present gold-saving appliances are capable of successfully treating, or that the ground is exceedingly rich. The two companies, out of their last year's operations, returned to the fortunate shareholders £6,520 in dividends. Pringle and party, I am informed, was little less successful.

The banks on both sides of the river for miles are known to be highly auriferous, and the public have waited with considerable anxiety the result of the first few weeks' work of the Golden Bed dredge on the eastern bank opposite Ettrick. The gold that has been won, I am pleased to say, is highly satisfactory, and proves that the banks are not only auriferous, but with suitable machinery can be profitably worked.

There are several sluicing claims in this locality, but every year the number gets less, the greater portion of the ground being now held as dredging claims. The Golden Run pipes obtained 660 oz. during the past year, a return which must be deemed very satisfactory when one takes into consideration the fact that the operations are not in a very large way.

There are thirty-six dredges actually working or ready for that purpose, and thirty-one in various stages of construction, all of which should during the current year be taking part in the weekly return of gold produced.

GENERAL.

The goldfields revenue collected at Clyde during the past year amounted to £2,948. There was a considerable falling-off in the number of applications for new ground.

Although I have only recently taken charge of this district, I cannot but be favourably impressed with the general prosperity and well-doing of the residents throughout, both farmer and miner alike. Employment for tradesmen and labourers seems to be plentiful, and very few idle men are to be seen.

The Under-Secretary for Mines, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

FRED. J. BURGESS, Warden.

Mr. Warden STRATFORD to the UNDER-SECRETARY for MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Lawrence, 3rd May, 1901.

I have the honour to forward you herewith statistical returns for the year ended 31st March, 1901, and submit the following report on the several mining districts under my charge for the same period :—

WETHERSTONE'S.

The Golden Rise dredge is still working on the Wetherstones Flat, and the owners—Messrs. Smyth, Adams, and Donlan—also work a claim by hydraulic sluicing in the same locality, and I understand they both yield very good returns.

The Happy Valley Gold-dredging Company (Limited) are now building a dredge, on ground purchased from Mr. T. Pope, to work the land up towards McCluskey's Flat, and it should be ready to start work in a few months.

The Golden Crescent Sluicing Company (Limited) have had a very successful year's sluicing. The company cleared off a heavy debt, and the finances are now, I understand, in a very satisfactory position.

TUAPEKA FLAT.

Five dredges are now at work on the Tuapeka River below Lawrence. Four of them have been working for a few years with satisfactory results; the fifth is the Reliance dredge, and it started operations about a fortnight ago. The return for the first week in opening out was 11 oz., which looks well for the prospects of the company.

BLUE SPUR.

The Blue Spur and Gabriel's Gully Consolidated Gold Company (Limited) obtained a yield of gold for the year of 1,878 oz., valued at £7,448.

Messrs. Kitto and party are still working (by hydraulic) the tailings in Munro's Gully with satisfactory results, and Messrs. Mills and Browne have also been working all the year near the foot of Munro's Gully.

DREDGING ON THE CLUTHA RIVER.

Since my last report twelve months ago, I beg to state that no new up-to-date dredge has been completed to work the Clutha River between the Tuapeka Mouth and the Talla Burn, above the Beaumont, though several are under construction, and should be ready to commence work in a few months. I therefore have nothing new to report on dredging on the Clutha River within my district.

WAITAHUNA.

There are now four dredges, all private concerns, working at Waitahuna, and they are all supposed to be doing fairly well. Another one, the property of the Waitahuna Gully Gold-dredging Company (Limited), is nearly completed. With this dredge it is intended to work the flat at the lower end of Waitahuna Gully.

The sluicing claims higher up the gully, belonging to the Sailor's Gully Gold-mining Company (Limited) and Messrs. Thomson and party, have been working for the whole of the year with fair returns.

GLENORE.

The opposition of the farmers and landowners on the Tokomairiro Plain has crippled the dredging industry at Glenore. The number of working dredges is now reduced to two.