

Parapara Hydraulic Sluicing and Mining Company (Limited).—Mining operations have been carried on by this company throughout the year, but in most cases, upon cleaning up, the results have not proved encouraging. This is owing chiefly to the difficulty in working, it being necessary to put a great quantity of non-gold-bearing material through the boxes before the rich wash which exists can be worked.

The Golden Block, Taitapu (Limited).—This quartz-mine gives the most consistent return of any concern in the district. The quantity of quartz crushed for the period to which this report relates was 2,411 tons, from which a yield of 2,222 oz. of gold was obtained. The company employ thirty men.

One reason for this report being delayed so long is that I have been unable to obtain some information concerning the Taitapu Gold Estates (Limited), and have to omit it in the return. Had the statement of affairs appeared in the *New Zealand Gazette*, the information could have been got from that source; but no statement has been published in the *Gazette*, and my request through the Clerk of the Warden's Court at Collingwood to the attorney for the company for the facts required has not been complied with. So far as I can gather, this company has been carrying on operations at the Golden Ridge and Ant Hill Mines, but the returns have been very small.

Quartz Ranges.—A party of tributaries, working on the Quartz Ranges upon a claim formerly worked by the Collingwood Goldfields Company (Limited), who erected a valuable plant, have obtained payable gold as a result of sluicing operations carried on by them.

TAKAKA SUBDISTRICT.

During the year fifteen applications were received and heard for mining privileges.

At Bubu the Takaka Sluicing Company's claim still keeps up its reputation as a paying concern. During the past year there were 900 oz. of gold obtained and two dividends declared of £450 each, besides £450 retained as a reserve fund. The claim is worked by three shifts. The average amount paid in wages and incidental expenses has been about £100 per month. The last washing-up for a fortnight's work produced 58 oz. of gold. The ground on this claim has, I understand, been thoroughly prospected, and it would seem that the shareholders may reasonably look forward to good results for several years. This is really the only claim which is doing any good in this subdistrict. There are four others in the locality, but the returns obtained are, I am informed, extremely poor.

The Anatoki, Jackson's, and Sheepy Flat Claims are lying idle.

At Upper Anatoki a prospecting party has been formed and subsidised by some Takaka residents to thoroughly prospect that locality. This party at present are turning the river to enable them to work a bar. The great hindrance to working in this locality is the difficulty of procuring food; all the necessaries of life have to be carried on men's backs for several miles. If a track were made to enable horses to pack supplies I believe it would be possible for a good many men to find remunerative work in this part of the country. There are two other men prospecting the reefs further up on the ranges on their own account, but with what result is not known. There is one old hatter working a claim on the Anatoki River.

At the head of Waingarō River two men have gone to prospect.

At Waitoi there are three fossickers working for very little.

WANGAPEKA SUBDISTRICT.

Only three men are now working on the Rolling River (Blue and Nuggety Creeks), who are old hands. They have made themselves comfortable surroundings and are content to work for small returns. A little prospecting has been done for reefs during the summer months on the hills at the head of Rolling River, but as yet without any practical results.

The Wangapeka Gold-dredging Company.—The dredge which has been working on this river during the year has now closed down, and the company has gone into liquidation. It is reported the average weekly earnings have been only about 3 oz. The company have expended £13,000 during its existence. There seems very little prospect of any further work being done here. In the opinion of experienced miners there was no chance of success from the first, as very little gold has ever been obtained from the lower reaches of this river, whilst the bed of the upper portion is too rough and rocky for dredging.

Sherry Valley.—Only one man is at work, on private property. He has a complete hydraulic plant, and is said to be making fair average wages.

The Baton.—This river has been practically deserted during the past year, only one miner, who is a settler in the district, putting in his spare time on the river, and this with very poor results. The demand for labour on the Tadmor-Motupiko Section of the Midland Railway has no doubt induced many old miners to work for regular wages on the railway-formation.

MOTUEKA SUBDISTRICT.

As far as I can ascertain, there are only four miners working on the table-land, and they are making a bare living. There are two water-races, one tail-race, and two dams in existence in this locality, but no gold-saving appears to have been effected by the owners of these rights. The holders of the prospecting licenses for asbestos have long since allowed them to lapse.

COAL.

This is becoming a most important industry. The Puponga Coal and Gold Mining Company (Limited), have made really considerable headway with the development of their colliery at Puponga during the twelve months, the output for that period being 12,042 tons. The output is now rapidly increasing owing to the further development of the mine, and it is now estimated to average 100 tons