

The Shotover Quartz Mine, near Skipper's Point, was worked during a good portion of the year; but operations were subsequently suspended to allow of arrangements being entered into for the acquisition of additional capital in order to provide means for the further development of the mine.

Prospecting in the locality has come in for a fair share of attention, and a Reefton company (known as the Eureka Gold-mining Company) have commenced active operations on a small scale at their claim in Jennings's Gully.

Quartz-mining at Preservation Inlet is now for practical purposes at a standstill.

Very full particulars of the year's operations in respect to this branch of the industry in the southern part of the colony will be found in the report of Mr. E. R. Green, Inspector of Mines, and also references to it are made by Wardens Burgess and McEnnis in their reports.

#### HYDRAULIC AND ALLUVIAL MINING.

This branch of the gold-mining industry is, with the exception of the small amount of work done on Stewart Island, confined to the goldfields of the Middle Island, the principal centres being in the Nelson, Westland, and Otago provinces. Taken as a whole, there is very little change to report as compared with the operations of the preceding year; the principal hydraulic mines maintain a very steady output of gold and find employment for a numerous body of workmen. The characteristics of many claims in the several districts, together with particulars of the working plant, have been described in previous reports, and do not need to be recapitulated. In a few instances ground which was attempted to be worked by dredges is being satisfactorily worked by hydraulic sluicing and elevating.

So far as alluvial mining in the Marlborough Province is concerned, it may be almost placed on a parallel with quartz-mining in the same district. Very little work has been done during the year. A few men find employment in the localities of Mahakipawa, Wakamarina, Top Valley, Arm-chair Creek, and Onamalutu. A party of five men, who have what they consider a good claim in the last-named locality, have been engaged in improving their water-supply arrangements. Attempts to drain the King Solomon Mine, at Mahakipawa, have been made; but it appears that increased pumping-power is required.

At Takaka (Nelson), the Bubu Hydraulic Sluicing Company have had a fairly good year; their claim constitutes the only one of any working extent in the immediate locality. Some attention is being given to prospecting in the Upper Anatoki portion of the district; but prospectors experience considerable difficulty in getting supplies owing to the absence of tracks. This is a matter which is receiving attention from the local authorities.

The Parapara Hydraulic Sluicing Company, whose claim is at Parapara, near Collingwood, are now engaged on a scheme which is estimated to very materially assist the working operations and enable the deeper ground of the company's freehold flat to be worked. The project comprises the driving of a drainage-tunnel upwards of 600 ft. in length, which is calculated to drain the ground to a depth of 25 ft. and enable it to be worked level-free. The tunnel will act generally as a tail-race. Below this it is proposed to work to a depth of 60 ft. by means of hydraulic elevators. The new arrangements are expected to be in working-order about the middle of the present year. Gold to the value of £2,985 was won during the year 1905.

The Slate River Sluicing Company obtained gold to the value of £1,179 10s. 3d. as the result of their work during the year. Their operations were considerably restricted by reason of an insufficient supply of water; but work has been put in hand to minimise this difficulty as regards the future, increased storage-capacity being provided.

Work in the Quartz Ranges Claim, now the property of Mr. C. Y. Fell, of Nelson, has been carried on by a party of tributers, and fairly good results obtained. The water-supply is abundant and constant, Boulder Lake being the source from which the water is obtained.

Alluvial mining in the immediate vicinity of Westport cannot be regarded as being in a particularly flourishing condition. A few small parties and fossickers are scattered about in the gullies and on the terrace lands in localities where work was conducted on a more extensive scale some years ago. These men may be said to be gleaning the remains of previous mining operations rather than making any fresh discoveries.

Work at Addison's is fairly steady, and the locality appears to offer a field of operations for a few parties for a few years to come. The gold-yield is generally regarded as satisfactory. Two parties who worked the cement deposits have ceased operations. These deposits consist of a closely cemented sand carrying gold. The cement was crushed in stamp-batteries and the gold recovered by the amalgamation process.

At Charleston Beach, Messrs. Powell continue to work the black sands by hydraulic sluicing and elevating. The sand and water on leaving the elevator is led through sluice-boxes on to a wide spread of tables fitted with silvered plates on which the gold is saved by amalgamation. It is understood that the results of working are of a very profitable and satisfactory character.

The Charleston Beach Sluicing Company have disposed of their beach property to Messrs. Powell and turned their attention to the prospecting of the Croninville plateau. The results appear to have warranted further expenditure, as operations for bringing a water-supply for sluicing purposes have been put in hand.

"Beachcombing," a form of alluvial mining carried on along the beaches at a few places in the colony, is more extensively carried on in this locality than elsewhere. The *modus operandi* is very simple and the plant inexpensive. Quite a number of families make a very fair living in the vicinity of Charleston by this method of work. The plant principally consists of a silvered plate carried on a two-wheeled barrow over which the auriferous black sand is run by means of a small flow of water,