

the previous year. In the hope of obtaining better results, the faces recently worked were abandoned, and the whole distributing pipe-line system was rearranged to open out fresh ground at the commencement of 1906. The general equipment of plant, &c., is kept in good order and condition.

Craig's Freehold.—This property is still worked on tribute by Butland and Chesterman (six men), but the values obtained have not been encouraging. Timbering and ventilation are well maintained.

University Reserve.—Perry and mate are prospecting on the reserve, but values are not important.

Back Creek.—Peter Fisher has driven a prospecting-tunnel 400 ft. in length under the auspices of the Rimu Prospecting Association. The tunnel is located about one mile south of any previous driving on the Brighton Bottom. Clifton and party (six men) have just completed a tunnel through Hartridgen's ground, to obtain free access to their own claim, which they are now opening out: the tunnel is carefully timbered. Milligan and party are driving with the object of picking up the Brighton bottom, so favourably worked by Hartridgen. Hartridgen and party (two men), having completed driving, are now blocking out the ground on a 7 ft. wash with payable results. Ryan, Knight, and Spence, having completed their low-level driving, are now blocking out on a 5 ft. wash: all work securely timbered. Johnson and party are continuing to block out from their subsidised tunnel: returns only giving small wages.

SUBSIDISED WORKS.

Arahura Flat.—Harcourt's drainage-tunnel is further subsidised a distance of 666 ft., of which 150 ft. is driven. Attention was drawn to the necessity for better ventilation.

Lark's Terrace.—Noble's subsidised tunnel intersected the auriferous lead at a driven distance of 716 ft., but, the values not being payable, driving was further extended 143 ft.

George Davis (Shallow Rush) was granted £25 to assist in bringing in a tail-race which is now satisfactorily completed.

Arch Creek.—Boyd and party have driven their subsidised tunnel from the 300 ft. peg the authorised distance of 1,200 ft., with unfavourable results. A further subsidy has been authorised to assist the party to drive an additional 1,000 ft.

Park Terrace, Ross.—Coughlan and party drove their subsidised tunnel 541 ft. It collapsed at a section of wet pug about 200 ft. from the face.

Ross.

Mont d'Or.—Sluicing operations at this property are not regularly continuous, owing to the irregular water-supply during dry seasons. The returns for the year show a shrinkage of 229 oz. 15 dwt. 20 gr. For the purpose of effecting the drainage of the deep auriferous deposits, a low-level tail-race is now under construction which is calculated to touch the marine formations, the expenditure being fully justified by the values taken from the sinkings recently carried out at different parts on the face. Water-races and general equipment are well maintained.

Smith and party are sluicing with profitable results when water is available. Water-races and plant are in good order.

Old Ross United.—There are three parties who continue to sluice down the terrace lands with fair success.

McLeod's Terrace.—Development-work, which provided employment for twelve men, is now completed and sluicing commenced. The operations are not yet sufficiently advanced to enable a fair estimate of possibilities being made.

WAIHO

Waiho Sluicing and Elevating Company.—5/9/05: This company had eight men employed in removing the elevating plant from the North Bank, Waiho, which will be re-erected on the south side.

Four parties, comprising five men, are fossicking along the banks and beaches of the Waiho River.

Batson and party (three men) have just opened a promising face of wash. From the prospects obtained this should be a profitable concern.

On the application of W. Earnshaw, protection was granted on his dredging and other mining areas for six months, on the plea that the original time was not sufficient to erect the plant necessary for the treatment of fine gold.

Wataroa and Waitaha Rivers.—On the north beach of the Wataroa River five men find employment in washing a deposit which is brought down by the heavy flood-waters.

Duffer's Creek.—McArthur continues to earn a living-wage by prospecting along the banks of this creek.

Big Waitaha.—Four parties, comprising eleven men, are engaged in washing the black-sand deposits on the sea-beach at the mouth of the Big Waitaha.

DREDGING.

The gold-dredging industry continues to show a gradual but steady decline on the Coast, and, with the exception of reconstructing the Golden Point dredge on the Wakamarina River, dredge-building has been practically at a standstill. At the end of December, 1905, the number of dredges in actual work was forty, this being a decrease of five as compared with the preceding year. Of the original companies registered quite a number have liquidated, and in several instances, where the dredges were not dismantled, they were purchased by private parties and are now worked under partnership agreements. According to the annual statistics to hand, the value of gold won amounted to £103,277 17s. 4d.