

is maintained underfoot on No. 3 level. Prospecting has been further extended to within 1 chain of the old boundary of the No. 4 Taitapu Block, but so far values are not important. However, hope is entertained that a strike of payable quartz may live down, as rich stone is known to exist below No. 3. Bush-fires have lately been a formidable enemy, and, although the efforts of all the mining staff were fully engaged in fighting the fires for several days and nights, the works have suffered considerable damage.

#### WESTPORT.

*Red Queen, Mokihinui* (owner, A. W. Mills, Westport).—As mentioned in my previous report, a rich pocket of ore was discovered near the western boundary of the lease. This ore was driven on for a distance of 112 ft., with the result that values did not warrant prospecting to be further continued. The tributaries are now engaged in the old levels. Ore crushed during the year amounted to 140 tons, yielding 124 oz. 16 dwt., valued at £490 5s. 3d.

*Britannia Mine*.—During the early part of the year prospecting was directed to the north-eastern section of the lease, where an outcrop was exposed, from which 48 tons of ore yielded 10 dwt. per ton by amalgamation; but as driving extended into the hill the lode widened, and values decreased. No. 7 was driven to get sufficient gold to assist in prospecting the lower levels. Also, a branch drive was driven 100 ft. from No. 6, to prove if the run of gold is intersected by the dyke, or lives into the hill country. So far, the existence of gold into the hill has not been proved. In the Early Bird section several drifts have been extended, with fruitless results.

#### LYELL.

*New Alpine Gold-mining Company* (R. A. Stewart, mine-manager).—Since the present company reopened this property, the No. 7 level (adit) was further extended to pick up a rich lead, which in the first workings had been profitably worked. Also, a winze was sunk to a depth of 80 ft., where the reef split into three separate veins. This level face is now standing, and stopping commenced about 400 ft. from the face on a thin low-grade leader, about 8 in. thick. While stopping this leader a patch of gold was found on the casing of the lode, which yielded 5 oz. from 20 lb. of slate. Unhappily, further recurrence of this find has not since been reported. On No. 10 level (adit), 3,500 ft. below the surface-level, the chamber over the vertical shaft was thoroughly re-timbered and put in good repair before reopening the deeper levels. On No. 12 level winze-sinking was continued north and south to depths varying from 40 ft. to 50 ft., while on the north level the ore is broken and irregular. The south winze was sunk on fair stone from 2 ft. to 3 ft. in width to a depth of 50 ft., at which level driving will be commenced early, and the ore will be hoisted by an air-driven winch, now in course of erection. Repairs were effected to battery, cyanide, and general surface equipments preparatory to crushing at the beginning of the current year.

#### BOATMAN'S.

*Welcome*.—This mine, formerly owned by the Consolidated Goldfields of New Zealand (Limited), has been surrendered. During the year a local party did some prospecting, but so far results are not reported.

*Specimen Hill* (Howell and Kennedy's subsidised tunnel).—Further payment has not been made on work done during the year.

*Buller United*.—Since the property was last visited, the owners have driven a crosscut from the original working, intersecting a reef of 2 ft. in thickness.

*New Caledonian Gold-mining Company (Limited)*.—This subsidised shaft, 10 ft. by 4 ft., has been sunk to a finished depth of 101 ft., at a contract price of £4 per foot, added to which are wages for two engine-drivers at £3 10s. per week so long as the present inflow of water exists. Sinking is effected through hard slate, intermixed with quartz veins, the finished dimensions being divided into two winding and one ladderway compartments. The average quantity of water is computed at 400 gallons per hour, baled by a 40-gallon tank. The estimated depth to the lode is 250 ft. Steam-driven winding-engines were recently installed.

#### REEFTON.

*Wealth of Nations*.—During the year the quartz required for milling was almost exclusively taken from Nos. 7 and 8 stopes, on the main line of reef, together with a small tonnage obtained from the smaller foot-wall reef (on both of these levels), besides which a small parcel was stoped on Nos. 9 and 10 levels. At the commencement of the year a chamber was cut on No. 10 level, and shortly afterwards the crosscut was extended to the position determined to cut the reef. When the reef was encountered, this level was developed in the usual manner with two rise-connections efficient for ventilation and the passing of ore from the stopes. Development was further extended on No. 6 level by crosscutting the foot-wall, with the object of intersecting the smaller foot-wall reef. On No. 7 level this foot-wall reef was sunk on for about half the distance towards the lower level. On No. 8 level a crosscut from the main line of reef was put through successfully, with the object of intersecting the same reef. When encountered, the reef was driven on to its limit both north and south, and a connection with the winze from No. 7 level completed. By this means a valuable block of ore of somewhat irregular and narrow dimensions was opened, from which a good tonnage of high-grade ore is expected, as it is the intention to locate the same body of stone on No. 9, providing it exists. Attempts have been made to locate the same ore-body on No. 6 level, but the crosscut only succeeded in locating a boulder, which was not thought to be connected with the stone looked for. On No. 7 level a considerable quantity of crosscutting was done in the hanging-wall in search of the old Energetic Block,