

Roger and party (six men) have taken up a river-bed area located a short distance above the old Beaconsfield Mine, which they intend to drain by hydraulic power. Meanwhile water rights are not yet applied for, and other developments are not important. Two of the party were opening up an old tunnel, pending water rights.

Beaconsfield Quartz-mine.—Whilst passing this old abandoned property, attention was directed to the rotten and dilapidated condition of the woodwork in connection with water-race and head-gear of the winding-shaft. The ten-stamp mill and housing are still in good repair, although standing open and unprotected.

North Terrace, Mokihinui.—This subsidised tunnel was completed in the early part of the year, and its earning-power is set down at £2 per week.

ADDISON'S.

St. John's Terrace (Brady and party—four men).—During the year considerable labour has been expended towards the removal and relaying of pipe-lines to reopen and develop fresh faces. Also, the low-level tail-race is being further extended 200 ft., to develop a western section of the property. Mining and general equipment are in good order, while the water-supply is now constant under all conditions of weather.

Carmody and Party (six men).—This energetic party continue to push their sluicing and elevating operations on systematic principles. Water-supply from the Totara River is steadily maintained, and operations are directed on a face fully 20 ft. in depth. Special care is taken to insure safety, while the elevating plant and general equipment are kept in good order.

Venture Claim.—Since work was suspended in mining and crushing the cemented auriferous sands, operations have been strictly directed to the alluvial section of the property, on which lucrative employment is maintained. The gravels vary in depth from 8 ft. to 10 ft., and carry payable gold throughout. Water is also plentiful, and with the loose sandy nature of the wash, treatment is much simplified.

Neil and Party (formerly Knight and party—five men).—This sluicing and elevating property, originally opened in 1870, has been worked continuously for thirty-five years, and, were it possible to compute the time required to exhaust the untouched workable areas on the same ratio, the existence of the claim would remain a problem. Taking the worked areas as a whole, the thickness of gravels has varied considerably; but, whilst confining my remarks to the face now operated on, depth of gravels varies from 15 ft. to 20 ft., thinning eastward with the gradual rise of the blue marine bottom in the direction of the Dirty Mary's Creek. Values also have varied, but, in taking a general average, lucrative employment has been maintained throughout the whole period worked.

Millikin and Party.—During the year sluicing operations were suspended, and work wholly directed to mining and crushing the cemented auriferous sands which overlie highly auriferous gravel deposits. Up to time of writing, milling has been confined to two shifts, but the owners anticipate commencing full time in a few days, as one eight-hour shift of three miners can keep the ten-stamp mill fully employed.

CHARLESTON.

Powell's Sluicing and Elevating Claim.—Since the water-races and pipe-line installations (as mentioned in previous report) were completed, to work the north and south beaches as a joint concern, other developments, outside the ordinary sluicing and elevating operations, are not important. Speaking generally, plant and mining equipment applicable to the various works are well maintained in good order.

Shetland Beach.—This auriferous black-sand beach continues to afford employment to twenty beachcombers, with varied results; but during the late fine weather returns were less favourable, as the auriferous deposits depend much on the heavy surge arising from the south-west gales.

Lavery and mate are working a sluicing and elevating claim adjoining the Charleston Bay. The gravels resting on the blue marine bottom are easily elevated and distributed over a series of matted tables, from which fair returns are obtained.

Argyle Water-race.—The Argyle section of water-race supplied from the dam to operate direct on the site of mining operations has an approximate length of two miles, and from the penstock the pressure due to a vertical fall of 170 ft. is maintained on the nozzle. This section of race was recently overhauled and the dam strengthened, but under the conditions which have existed during the last six years conservation is practically dependent on its own watershed, which, in dry weather, is very limited. Leading from the dam, the first mile is now in good repair, and the tunnel, 45 chains in length, cleared and securely timbered, thus leaving two miles to complete and join the upper section of the race, now utilised for power purposes by the Four-mile Sawmilling Company. On the application by the County Council for a further subsidy of £200 to complete the work throughout, the Hon. the Minister of Mines has given his approval, and the work is now proceeding satisfactorily.

MURCHISON.

The Walker Maruia Gold-sluicing Company (C. S. Beilby, mine-manager); M. M. Webster, secretary, Nelson).—In previous report mention was made that the various works in connection with the development of this extensive sluicing proposition were completed in the beginning of the year 1907, and the water turned on. Since then sluicing operations were continued for some time, pending the arrival and erection of an improved hydraulic winch specially designed for the removal of large boulders which occur frequently in the wash-dirt. The yield of gold for the year was 97 oz. 1 dwt., valued at £362 11s. 11d.