

able prospects. A tunnel is being driven to cut the reef at a depth of 50 ft. below the outcrop. A subsidy of £25 was granted towards the work.

Reefton Prospecting Association.—Two parties of two men each were assisted by the association to prospect for reefs in the locality of Burke's Creek. The work, which was conducted during the early part of the year, did not prove successful.

BLACKWATER.

Blackwater Mines (Limited).—Successful results have attended this company's operations during the year. Extensive development-work has been carried out. Nos. 1 (or 150 ft.), 2 (or 307 ft.), and 3 (or 432 ft.) levels have been advanced north on the reef 919 ft., 499 ft., and 580 ft. respectively, resulting in the opening-up of large blocks of stone of good value. The main shaft has been sunk 77 ft. below No. 3 level, and it is proposed to continue sinking for two or more levels. A tunnel is being driven from battery level, which will connect with the main shaft about 40 ft. below No. 3 level. When completed all quartz won from the upper workings will pass by gravitation to this level, thereby effecting a considerable saving in haulage. The east and west crosscuts at No. 3 level were advanced 67 ft. and 158 ft. respectively, but did not disclose anything of value. Total footage under development-work for the year amounted to 3,505 ft. of driving and crosscutting, 1,060 ft. sinking and rising. Timbering, filling of stopes, and all requirements for the safety of the workmen have been satisfactorily attended to. Stopping has been carried on generally at Nos. 1, 2, and 3 levels. The quartz won from all points, amounting to 29,955 tons, was treated for a return of 19,087 oz. 16 dwt. gold, valued at £73,281 12s. 2d. At the battery a tube mill has been installed, resulting in an increased tonnage treated by approximately 25 tons per day. Slimes plant, comprising four B and M tall tanks, three settlers, and three each decyaniding and dewatering filters, have been erected. To provide power for working this additional plant, preparations are being made to erect 100-horse-power suction-gas plant, which is now on the ground. An average of 190 men was employed.

Prohibition Claim.—A low-level tunnel was driven 900 ft., close to the Blackwater Company's boundary. Several reef tracks were intersected, but none of them carried payable stone. An option having been secured by Mr. David Ziman over this claim and two adjoining prospecting licenses, it is expected that development will be carried on more vigorously in the future.

Blackwater Miners' Association.—A further subsidy of £100 was granted to enable the association to continue its prospecting operations in the Blackwater district. No payable reefs were discovered, but an extensive area of auriferous wash was proved to exist at a high elevation. This deposit, owing to its elevation and the want of an efficient water-supply, cannot be profitably worked.

PAPAROA.

Mount Paparoa Syndicate (late Taffy Mine).—Operations during the year have been directed principally to making alterations and additions to plant. These comprise replacing the old water-wheel with a Pelton, erecting water-race at high elevation with necessary piping, constructing incline tramway from mine to mill, and sawmill plant for own requirements. These improvements are completed, and should result in better returns being secured in the future. The quantity of ore treated during the year amounted to 150 tons, which yielded 35 oz. 19 dwt. gold, valued at £145. An average of five men was employed. Considerable difficulty was experienced in getting material to the mine, owing to its inaccessible situation and absence of road.

Garden Gully Gold-mining Company (Limited).—Two men were employed intermittently during the year. A rise was put up from No. 2 level to the surface, but nothing of importance was discovered.

Mitchell and Hargreaves.—This party is prospecting in the Upper Moonlight district. An extension of 66 ft. has been driven in their subsidised tunnel without cutting any reefs.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Reviewing the returns as furnished by the owners of quartz-mines for the years 1908 and 1909, the ore milled for 1908 was 95,156 tons, yielding bullion valued at £160,156, against 755 persons employed; whilst for the year 1909 the ore milled was 108,136 tons, yielding bullion valued at £214,876, against 868 persons employed. In comparing the returns, an all-round increase is shown for 1909: in tonnage milled, 12,980 tons; value of bullion, £54,720; and number of persons employed, 113. Dividends paid during 1908 amounted to £16,600, and during 1909 to £43,955, an increase for 1909 of £27,355. During the year one fatal accident occurred in connection with quartz-mining.

HYDRAULIC AND ALLUVIAL MINING.

MARLBOROUGH.

Enchanted Creek.—Larkin and party are erecting a hydraulic sluicing and elevating plant to work the deep ground in the lower portion of Enchanted Creek. A water-race over a mile in length is being constructed, which will deliver the water required for elevating purposes at an effective elevation of 300 ft. This party's operations are being watched with interest throughout the district, for, if successful, there are other deep alluvial flats in the locality supposed to contain payable gold which will be taken up and worked on similar lines. Subsidy to the amount of £150 was granted towards this work.

COLLINGWOOD.

Parapara Hydraulic Sluicing and Elevating Company.—This company continues to successfully operate on the deep gravels in their freehold section. From an area of ground comprising