

will, when erected, be watched with interest by the mining community, as there is little doubt that the whole of the beaches along the sea-coast of this district carry sufficient gold to admit of profitable working when means are devised for saving the whole of the fine gold carried by the beaches.

#### KUMARA.

The gold won in the Kumara district from the several alluvial claims being worked shows a decrease on the figures of the preceding year. This, however, must not be taken as an indication that the field is worked out, but is accounted for by reason of the fact that the operations of a number of the parties operating in the Westbrook district have been impeded, and in some cases stopped, on account of the tailings from their workings interfering with the old Westbrook-Greenstone Road. The construction of the deviation of the road is proceeding, and when completed the returns for the district should reach the figures of recent years.

The Taipo and Kelly's Range district has attracted some attention during the year, prospecting for quartz reefs having been carried on. These operations have led to the discovery by Messrs. Hopkins and party of a reef which it is estimated can be worked profitably. In all an area of 900 acres has been taken up under ordinary prospecting license in the locality. The New Zealand Greenstone (Limited) is now holding under mineral-prospecting warrants and ordinary prospecting licenses an area of 5,400 acres, over which prospecting operations have been proceeded with. A contract has been let by the company for the construction of three-quarters of a mile of road from the company's aerial-tramway terminus to the main Christchurch Road, over which the stone from the quarries will pass *en route* to the coast for shipment.

#### STAFFORD.

Mining has proceeded steadily in the Stafford, Goldsborough, and Callaghan's districts, the miners in all cases obtaining good returns for their labour.

#### ROSS.

I have little change to report in respect to the condition of the industry in this district. Some 1,538 acres of land have been taken up under ordinary prospecting license, chiefly on the sea-beach.

The Ross Goldfields (Reconstructed) commenced putting their mine in order, and made arrangements for the installation of a 235 h.p. oil-engine as a stand-by plant to insure against the flooding of the mine in the event of breakage in the power-line or failure of the electrical-power plant.

#### OKARITO.

A number of prospecting parties have been engaged on the Okarito North beach, as an outcome of which practically the whole of the beach has been taken up under licenses for special claims, the object of the licensees being to work the ground by means of Kershaw pumps immediately the funds to provide the necessary plants can be raised. The beaches from the Saltwater to Gillespie's have been prospected and a number of claims taken up, while a large area still remains under ordinary prospecting license. Mining has proceeded steadily at Okarito River and Omerca, and a number of miners have found profitable employment in washing the black sand along Bruce Bay, Hunt's Beach, and elsewhere.

Generally speaking, though no material advancement has been made by the industry during the year to which this report relates, the fact that so much labour and capital has been expended in prospecting-work, and that in so many cases the prospector has surrendered his prospecting license for a better title—that is to say, a "special-claim license," involving the payment of a substantial ground-rent—tends at least to show that the prospector has faith in his properties, but lacks the capital to develop same, the only possible method of working profitably involving an initial outlay beyond his means. As time goes on the capitalist may be persuaded that capital may be profitably invested in the development and working of a number of properties in the district.

#### REEFTON.

Chiefly owing to labour troubles, mining on the Reefton field has received a decided setback during the past year. From the month of May to the month of November the principal mines in the district, those under the management of the Consolidated Goldfields of New Zealand, have been practically closed down, and the returns from these mines for the year have been very small in comparison with those of former years. In the month of December the mines were reopened, but with only a very limited number of workmen.

The Keep-it-Dark Mine has continued work throughout the year, employing between fifty and sixty men, but no dividends have been paid from this mine for a number of years.

The most successful mine in the district is the New Big River Gold-mining Company's property, situate at Big River, about twenty miles from the Town of Reefton. This mine has been successfully worked for a number of years, and last year the returns were very good, regular monthly dividends being declared throughout the year.

No new discoveries have been reported in this district for some time; but some of the old mines which have been lying idle for years have been reopened, and the prospects so far have been very encouraging, especially so in regard to the Inglewood Mine, now owned and worked by the Murray Creek Gold-mining Company (Limited), and the old Scotia, Drake, and Cumberland Mines, which are now being developed by the Consolidated Goldfields of New Zealand.

In the Blackwater and Snowy Creek districts vigorous prospecting is still being carried on, and the property owned by the Millerton Syndicate, which contains a valuable reef, has been successfully floated into a limited-liability company. A very large number of prospecting licenses have been granted in this locality.