

Collingwood District.

Parapara Hydraulic Sluicing and Elevating Company.—Work has been carried on continuously during the year, with about the usual average results. There is nothing fresh to report.

Aorere Hydraulic Sluicing Company, Slate River.—Very little work has been done during the year, three men having been employed portion of the time, for a return of 80 oz.

Maruia District.

Walker's Maruia Sluicing Company.—The water-race has been completed and sluicing operations commenced, but the race has given considerable trouble, and the gold-return for the year is given as nil.

The history of alluvial-mining companies in the Murchison County can so far be written in the one word "failure," and it now appears the Thompson Maruia Claim is not going to prove an exception.

Matakitaki.

Richardson and party continue to make a success of the Horse Terrace Claim, and this is a further example of the fact that a claim which is no good to a company is often a good thing for a working party of miners.

Hunter's Claim, Horse Terrace, formerly leased by Chinamen, has now been resumed by the owners, and is now being equipped on a bigger scale.

Mammoth Claim.—A little prospecting-work has been done during the year, but this company does not seem inclined to again attempt sluicing operations.

Buller Valley.

One or two small claims still exist along the Buller Valley, but nothing worthy of note is being done.

Fairdown.

Carthage Gold-mining Company.—This company is still carrying on work on the black-sand deposit at Fairdown, but, according to the returns furnished, can only be paying working-expenses.

Addison's Flat.

Shamrock Claim (Westland Gold-mining Syndicate).—Having completed the plant, this company has now commenced actual mining, but the results so far must have proved very disappointing.

Milliken and party during the year suspended their cement-crushing operations and began sluicing on another portion of the claim, with fair results.

Carmody and party have sold out to a syndicate, and a new water-race is being constructed, and more extensive plant installed, to work the ground on a bigger scale.

Other claims at Addison's have continued working as during the previous year, there being no interesting developments to report.

Grey Valley.

Lake Hochstetter Goldfields Company (Limited) has started operations during the year, and is now engaged in constructing a water-race from Lake Hochstetter down the south side of the Ahaura River along the route surveyed many years ago for the Mines Department by the late Mr. John Gow. This work will take about twelve months yet to complete, so that sluicing operations will not commence till some time early in 1915. There is a very large area of alluvial terraces commanded by this water-supply, and they are very favourably situated for mining as regards fall, and also in the character of the wash, which does not contain very heavy stones. It is the present intention of the management to employ the whole of the water-supply, eighty sluice-heads, in working the company's own claims, so that it should soon be proved whether there is truth in the opinion held by many who know the West Coast—that the large low-grade alluvial deposits can be made profitable if only worked on a sufficiently large scale.

The various tributary gullies along the Grey Valley—viz., Blackwater, Noble's, Duffer's Creek, Callaghan's, Nelson Creek, Nótown, Moonlight, and Blackball—still continue to support a few small parties of Europeans and Chinamen, but these are becoming fewer every year, and there is now no work going on which calls for any comment in this report.

DREDGING.

Hessey, Cameron, Tacon Dredge, Caplestone.—This machine, after paying very well for several years, was sunk and became a total wreck in June, and the attempts made to refloat her having failed, all work on the claim is suspended pending the building of a new machine.

Cameron Hessey's No. 7 Dredge, Frying-pan Gully.—This machine has been worked continuously during the year, and kept in good repair. Returns, though not large, have been payable.

Slab Hut Creek.—For a few months this claim was worked by Butler and party on tribute, but proved unpayable, and all work has now ceased.

Workshop Gold-dredging Company.—This claim has had another very successful year, and will again head the list as the most productive in New Zealand for the twelve months. A fresh area, 300 acres, has been acquired by the company, and, I am informed by the manager, has given very good prospects by boring, so that the future of the claim seems to be assured for some years to come.