

ANNEXURE B.

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF GOVERNMENT WATER-RACE MANAGERS.

WAIMEA-KUMARA WATER-RACES, WESTLAND. (Mr. JAMES ROCHFORD, Manager.)

Waimea Water-race.

The cash received for sales of water from this race for the year ended the 31st March, 1917, was £600 10s. 11d., and the expenditure on management, gauging, maintenance, and repairs amounted to £714 12s. 11d., showing a debit balance of £114 2s. on the year's transactions.

The average number of miners supplied with water during the year was 21·08, a decrease of 3·67 on the previous year; and the approximate amount of gold obtained by them was 1,160 oz., valued at £4,553, a decrease on that of last year of £1,519 6s.

The sales of water amounted to £676 3s. 8d., a decrease of £257 12s. 5d. on the previous year. Although the sales were the smallest for the past eight years, it does not by any means imply that the payable ground commanded by the Government water in the district is becoming worked out, but it can be accounted for to a great extent by the disastrous flood that occurred on the night of the 14th April (which has previously been fully reported on), which had the effect of materially reducing the ordinary supply of water for mining in the Callaghan's, Goldsbrough, and Stafford districts for the first five months of the year. There was also a scarcity of labour owing to the number of young men that enlisted for the war or were drawn in the ballot, with the result that two claims at least in the Stafford section had to close down for lack of men for some months during the year, and certain other parties could not use as much water as last year owing to the same reason.

The cash received was £313 7s. 8d. less than the previous year, and the expenditure increased by £12 18s. 11d., and the race is now in good order.

Although the past year was the driest in the memory of the oldest inhabitants, the supply of water in the Waimea Race after repairs had been completed at the end of August never fell below 29 or 30 heads of water, which was due to the additional supply from the newly constructed Waimea Branch Race from the Arahura, Wainihinihi, and Macpherson's Creeks, which supplied from 8 to 10 heads of water in the driest weather.

Kumara Water-race.

The cash received for sales of water from this race for the year ended the 31st March, 1917, was £71 13s. 1d., and the expenditure on management, gauging, maintenance, and repairs amounted to £349 13s. 9d., showing a debit balance of £278 0s. 8d. on the year's transactions.

The average number of miners supplied with water during the year was 4·66, a decrease of 8·75 on the previous year; and the approximate amount of gold obtained by them was 220 oz., having a value of £863 10s., a decrease on last year of £1,679 6s.

The sales of water amounted to £77 7s. 11d., a decrease of £264 as compared with the previous year.

The cash received was £143 0s. 11d. less than last year, and the expenditure was reduced by £125 16s. 1d.

Branch Race to Callaghan's and Middle Branch Flat.

The cash received for sales of water from this race for the year ended the 31st March, 1917, was £197 8s. 4d., and the expenditure on management, gauging, maintenance, and repairs amounted to £380 11s. 11d., showing a debit balance of £183 3s. 7d. on the year's transactions.

The average number of miners supplied with water was 4·75, a decrease of 2·19 on the previous year.

The approximate amount of gold obtained was 344 oz., having a value of £1,350 4s., a decrease of £767 10s. on last year.

The sales of water amounted to £198 17s. 6d., a decrease of £64 12s. 1d. on the preceding year.

The cash received for sales of water was £87 15s. less than for the previous year, and the expenditure was reduced by £48 6s. 11d.

Kumara Trans-Taramakau Water-race

Owing to the serious break which took place in the Taramakau pipe-line in the river-bed on the 20th November, 1915 (which was fully reported in my last annual report), water was supplied to the miners on the north bank of the river only during the last three weeks of the financial year. The Department called for tenders, which closed on the 31st May, 1916, for the construction of a pipe-bridge over the Taramakau River. The successful tenderer was Mr. H. J. Bignell, bridge contractor, of Greymouth, who started the construction-work on the 14th July, and the bridge was completed on the 20th December. The bridge is 328 ft. in length, and is a very strong structure, consisting of eight piers of hardwood piles, seven piles to the pier, and a land pier of three piles. The superstructure for carrying the 30-in. pipe main is composed of steel girders 16 in. by 6 in. by 33 ft. in length. The work of restoration was not finally completed until the 16th March, and since that time everything has gone on satisfactorily, and the water has been running continuously through the pipes. During the last three weeks of the year four parties, comprising in all seventeen men, were engaged in sluicing operations on the north bank of the Taramakau River, and purchased water to the value of £22 11s. 10d., but of this amount £9 16s. was authorized free water for opening up new ground.