

REEFTON.

Very little alluvial work has been done in this locality during the year. Several claims have worked, but the results were small. There has, however, been a good deal of active prospecting. An Auckland company known as the Alluvial Claims (Limited) has tested a large number of places about the district by means of boring and shaft-sinking. The results in several of them seem to prove the existence of payable areas. On one of them at Antonio's the cutting of a race is being started immediately, and it is expected that on another at Waitahu a start will be made very shortly at active operations. The company also prospected areas at the Landing, on the Buller and the Inangahua Rivers, at Orwell Creek, Stillwater Creek, Larry's Creek, Maori Gully, and Grey River. Gold was got in a number of these, but the area of pay-ground was in no case sufficient to justify the putting-on of either dredging or sluicing plants. A representative of English capital, Mr. Wray, also prospected some large areas in the district, but was not satisfied with the results.

Fatal Accident.

28th July Thomas Robbins was killed by a fall of stone at the Progress Mine.

Serious Non-fatal Accident.

19th December: Frederick Reginald Jones sustained fractures in both ankles by a fall in a prospecting-shaft at Larry's Creek.

SOUTHERN INSPECTION DISTRICT (Mr. A. WHITLEY, Inspector of Mines).

Quartz-mining.

GLENORCHY.

Glenorchy Scheelite-mining Company (Limited).—Mount Alfred Mine: No. 1 or battery level is being driven on the main lode north of the junction of the east and west lodes. No. 2 level, 47 ft. above No. 1, has been driven 200 ft. from the surface on the east lode, which varies from 2 ft. to 6 ft. in width and carries high-grade scheelite. At No. 3 level, 25 ft. above No. 2, driving and stoping has been carried out on the east and west lodes. Glenorchy Mine: No. 1A level has been extended to 500 ft. from the surface, and connected with No. 1 level, giving 100 ft. of backs on the lode and opening up a block for stoping. Stopping has been in progress at Nos. 1, 3, and 5 levels, high-grade ore having been won from No. 5 level. Junction Mine: A block of good ore was discovered on the surface in the Bonnie Jean section. This is worked opencast, water being used for stripping off the clay overburden. The output of scheelite concentrates by the company shows an increase of 10 tons over the 1916 return.

The principal producers of scheelite among the small parties of miners engaged in the industry were Paulin and Tripp, Black Peak (20½ tons), and Birley and party, Mount Larkins (5½ tons). Small ore crushing and dressing plants, worked by hand, horse, or water power, have been installed for dressing the scheelite, and a high-grade concentrate is produced.

MACETOWN.

United Goldfields (Limited). This company resumed operations in the latter part of the year. Levels are being driven in the All Nations and Garibaldi sections of the mine to test the reefs 220 ft. and 160 ft. respectively below the upper workings.

MACRAE'S.

Golden Point Gold and Scheelite Company.—Owing to the lodes in the upper levels having been practically worked out, development has been commenced at deeper levels. For this purpose an intermediate level is being driven between the smithy and Donaldson's low levels. Scheelite and gold to the value of £3,061 was produced during the year.

Gold and Tungsten (Mount Highlay).—Operations in this mine have ceased. The battery and tramways were dismantled and sold for removal.

Mareburn Gold and Scheelite Company (Mount Highlay).—From opencast workings on the lode in Block 18, 3,196 tons of ore have been mined, and treated for a return of scheelite and gold valued at £2,037. Work has been carried on continuously throughout the year.

Stoneburn Mining Company.—Operations were carried out during the year on Mouat's and battery lodes. From the level on the battery lode a rise was put through to the surface 100 ft. The lode was small, and did not carry payable ore below the oxidized zone of country, which is characteristic of the lodes in this locality. Most of the ore treated was won from the outcrop of Mouat's lode.

Ten small parties were engaged in scheelite-mining during the year. Of these, Messrs. Gaytan and Fraser were the most successful, producing about 4½ tons of scheelite concentrates. The work done consisted of trenching and sinking shallow shafts on the outcrops of lodes.

THE REEFS.

Pukerangi Mining Company.—This company was formed to develop a scheelite lode which was discovered by Mr. A. Ewart in 1916, at a point about one mile south-west of the Barewood lode. A level was driven 215 ft. to give 90 ft. of backs on the lode, and two rises were put up to the surface. Crosscuts from the level showed the lode to be about 20 ft. wide and carrying scheelite on both walls. An ore crushing and dressing plant was erected, consisting of stone-breaker, screens, jig, and Wilfley table, for treating high-grade ore, and 5-stamp battery for treating low-grade ore and tailing from screens and jig.