

affairs, as required by law, of sixteen gold-mining companies in the Thames and Coromandel districts are published for general information. The aggregate nominal capital of those sixteen gold mining companies is £280,800. The greater number of the companies referred to have been in operation. They were all being worked, save one, when the returns were sent in. Only four of the sixteen companies have declared dividends, and these aggregate only £2676 15s." Another view, and one which possibly may not place things in so gloomy a light, is suggested by a complaint of a correspondent of the 'West Coast Times' of the manner in which the balance-sheets of mining companies are gazetted. He instances the Ajax Company, and says;—"In the sheet referred to, although the company has been in existence for eleven months, there is no statement of profit and loss, and consequently only a select few, say the directors and manager, can know anything as to what portion of the large sum expended, viz., £12,188, has gone towards improving the mine, and thus possibly enabling future operations to be conducted more economically, or whether it has cost the whole of that sum to produce £10,966 16s 11d, the amount realised from gold and crushings."

Mr Richardson stated in the House of Representatives, on the 30th ult., that there was only a balance of £80,000, out of the £300,000 voted for water races on Gold Fields, available, and that was taken up by applications already sent in.

OTAGO.

The Lawrence correspondent of the 'Daily Times' writes:—"At the Blue Spur, one of Morrison's shareholders has sold his interest at a pretty good price. Another of the same party advertises his share for sale. This company is working its claim very vigorously, but there is a great quantity of ground to wash away yet. No remarks are made about following up the result of the Court of Appeal case. At Manuka Hill the miners are putting their shoulders to the wheel. They were kept back for some time by want of water, but they have had no reason to plead this lately. I believe the Manuka Hill Co. will wash up in about a fortnight, when no doubt a good dividend will be declared. The Bruce Quartz Mining Company, limited, and Dyer's Company have amalgamated their claims, and their united efforts will no doubt show themselves in some activity with regard to their mine. Both are pretty well versed in such matters. All the miners seem to be well occupied, and there is but little further news to relate about them."

A correspondent of the 'North Otago Times,' living at the Maerewhenua diggings, states that no effort was made by the Government to test the golden resources of the block sold as pastoral land to the Hon. R. Campbell. For any man to state positively that the block in question (we are not now referring to the known gold workings) is not auriferous, is in effect to hazard a class opinion on a subject about which no statistics have been sought. The Government should have appointed a practical Mining Commission to test the quality of the block.

Writing of the Maerewhenua goldfield, the 'North Otago Times' says:—"On this field there are five sluicing claims. In Reid and Hogan's claim, up to 17th December, 45 ounces of gold has been unearthed. After deducting expenses, there was from £5 to £6 per man per week. Cooper's claim has given to two men £8 per man per week. Nimmo's claim has yielded to three men 200 ounces. The water races run a length (total) of over 38 miles, with a carrying capacity of 56 heads, and the total of miners interested number 24. All these yields represent merely a partial working of ground believed by the surveyors who officially report to be highly payable. Within the application made by the miners, there is a total of 5300 acres of auriferous ground. With reference to means of access to the diggings, the surveyors report that the natural advantages are great, and can be made more convenient by artificial means which would involve comparatively little cost, and such expenditure would be almost immediately reproductive. The chief immediate requirement is a bridge, for which an excellent site is reserved. We have read all the reports on the subject of the sale of the Maerewhenua block to the Hon. R. Campbell, and we feel convinced that the land in question is nothing more nor less than a very rich goldfield admitting of almost indefinite extension."

The Provincial Engineer has reported upon the proposed sludge channel at Waipori. In his report, he says:—"For the present, the drainage requirements can be limited to a distance of four and a half miles, the new channel consequently need only extend between a point situated half a mile below the township, and its outlet at the river or stream. The fall is only at the rate of 6 6 feet per mile, but this will be sufficient for the drainage purposes alluded to. The cost of forming a channel of sufficient depth and general sectional area will be £5,800, and a further sum of £500 will be necessary for river diversion. The total cost will be thus £7300. This expenditure will permit of a large extent of auriferous ground being profitably wrought. The Provincial Council have passed a resolution recommending the General Government to sanction this highly remunerative work."

The 'Daily Times' correspondent at Orepuki writes:—"Mr Warden Wood arrived here on 21st ult., and has been kept very busy ever since. Several cases of importance are before the Court. To the astonishment of a great number, the Warden has been granting several agricultural leases, some of 200 acres. It does not appear to be a popular thing with most of the miners here, and there is likely to be some stir made in the matter."

Mr Grant, the legal manager of the Shotover Terrace Gold Mining Company has received a telegram from one of the Queenstown directors, and the working manager, announcing the result of the very imperfect and interrupted working during July, to be 163 ounces of gold. Now that the weather has improved, and that miners can be had at reasonable wages, it is stated that a steady improvement in the yield may be looked for. The directors do not propose to declare any dividend until the returns to 31st August have been received, which will, in fact, represent a period of something like six weeks.

The Northern Escort arrived in Dunedin late on the night of Tuesday, the 5th inst., with the following quantities of gold:—

	ozs.	dwt.
Queenstown ... ..	876	1
Cardrona ... ..	531	2
Arrow ... ..	253	9
Cromwell ... ..	1498	18
Clyde ... ..	170	0
Alexandra ... ..	529	11
Teviot ... ..	432	9
Blacks ... ..	500	0
Mount Ida ... ..	708	5
Palmerston ... ..	35	1
Macraes ... ..	65	11
	5600	5

The Clyde correspondent of the 'Daily Times' says:—"The Molyneux is now rapidly falling, and should the frosty weather continue, the river may soon be expected to be low enough to allow some of the beaches to be worked. The steam dredge Salamander has now got her new machinery into position. It has been tried, and is said to answer admirably. If so, it will enable the proprietor to overcome the difficulty of the drifting tailings. I am sorry to state that the pneumatic dredge is likely to come to grief. Its proprietors have for a long time been unsuccessful in striking on payable gold. They lately made arrangements to work the celebrated Clyde claim, but as yet have not been able to strike the right spot. The Company is in debt, and has been sued by one or two of the workmen, who have got judgments and executions. The bailiff advertises the plant for sale unless the claims are satisfied. This is a great pity, as it is possible that in a short time the dredge would have got on the rich ground said to exist in the Clyde claim. The sluicers are steadily working, though I do not hear of any washing up taking place. I am told that the special claim applied for by the Steam Dredge Company will be granted on the following conditions:—1000 feet for each £1000 expended, and the Company to employ one man for every 1000 feet granted, the maximum size of the claim to be 15,000 feet. This ought to be a large enough claim, as it will average 100 yards wide."

WEST COAST.

A late resident of Ross, Mr Gordon, has received elaborate plans and specifications from three of the most eminent hydraulic engineering firms in England for hydraulic machinery to work Jones flat, viz., from Sir W. Armstrong & Co, Gwynne & Co, and Easton & Anderson. The 'Ross News' advocates an effort being made to procure such machinery, pointing out its efficiency and economy.

Among late items from the Inangahua district, the 'Herald' furnishes the following:—"The Ajax Company have about fifty tons of stone raised from the shaft being put down from the low level tunnel, which is estimated to yield 1 1/2 oz to the ton. The shaft is down 26ft, showing an average thickness of reef of 3ft. As far as indicated, the Golden Fleece crushing is likely to yield most satisfactorily, the stone turning out equal to previous crushings. The last cleaning up gave a dividend after paying all expenses of £550 per share, and the next dividend is expected to be fully as much."

The heavy sea rolling on the Charleston beach has, says the 'Herald,' once more brought up a good layer of sand, to the delight of the beach combers.

A survey of the basin of Lake Hochstetter is being made, with the object of ascertaining the highest flood level, and also of determining the long existing supposition that there are other outlets for the immense drainage which comes into the lake, besides the only means of egress at present known, which is the valley of Nelson Creek. The work is going on at the expense of the General Government, and some engaged on it were formerly employed on the survey of the Lake Hochstetter Water-race. The plan to be followed is the cutting a track round the Lake, some distance inland, so that if there is—as in all probability there must be—another outlet in the direction of the head of the Ahaura river, it will be sure to be intersected. From the vast extent of the water-shed and drainage area of the Lake, and the capacity of the basin itself, it is hard to believe that the comparatively small quantity of water flowing down Nelson Creek is all that comes from this great natural reservoir. It is understood to be the intention to fill up all other outlets which may be found, and by this means force all the water to the Nelson Creek opening, thus increasing the volume available for the Hochstetter and Nelson Creek Water-race.

From the 'Westport Times' we learn that the Fiery Cross and Just-in-Time Companies have arranged to erect quartz crushing machinery jointly, and from present indications it is anticipated that the yield of gold from either claim will average three ounces to the ton.

There appears to have been a considerable depression in mining on the West Coast. The chairman of the County Council, in his speech to that body, said that the marked decrease in the item of gold export duty (the estimated amount of which was £6600, and actual £5619 7s 11d), is partly attributable to the prevalence of dry weather for several months at the beginning of the year, and also to the diversion of labor from goldmining to the public works. The decline in the receipts from local sources of revenue are indicative of a lessening yield of gold, and this will be the case until the construction of high level water-races takes place, or fresh auriferous deposits are found. For the encouragement of prospecting, it is satisfactory to state that the General Government are offering liberal rewards for discoveries of new gold fields.

The Lyell and Upper Buller correspondent of the Nelson Examiner writes:—"Mining news is much the same as in my last, the Excelsior stone is looking well, and hopes are expressed that it will go from 2 to 3 ozs. to the ton. It was reported last evening that the Alpine Company has just struck a rich leader, but I have not heard anything certain on the matter. The Break-o'-Day are blocking out some exceedingly rich quartz, their crushing is eagerly looked forward to, the stone is estimated to go at the lowest 10 ozs. to the ton."

A find of gold has recently been made on one of the terraces bordering on the Wangapeka river, that is calculated once more to bring prominently before the public that once famous but now almost