

on the ground that he now holds—for the last eighteen years. In the early days this ground was held in quarter-acre and 100-foot claims, and Mr. Aspinall bought one claim after another, until now he holds the whole of the auriferous ground on Skipper's Point. The area of ground worked here is about ten acres, and from that area about sixty thousand pounds' worth of gold have been obtained. Of this amount Mr. Aspinall has taken out about £30,000. He is one of the most enterprising miners in the colony. Indeed, it may be said that there are only two individual miners in Otago who have made mining a profession, and conducted their operations on an extensive and systematic manner; and these are John Aspinall, of Skipper's, and John Ewing, of St. Bathans; both of whom have been paid for their enterprise. Mr. Aspinall has the most improved hydraulic appliances for working his claim. Malleable-iron pipes, nozzles, and grating are all manufactured by himself on the ground. Indeed, his workshop and tools, although he lays no claim to be a mechanic, would not disgrace some engineering establishments, although on a smaller scale. The ground that Mr. Aspinall is at present working is from 140ft. to 190ft. in depth; and from 100ft. to 150ft. of this is loose shingle, which contains scarcely the colour of gold, the wash-drift being within 40ft. of the rock. To get away this large amount of top-stuff fifteen sluice-heads of water are required. This is conveyed in two sets of pipes, one having a head of 300ft. and the other 60ft. A plentiful supply of water is not to be had unless at an enormous expense. The present supply is got from small creeks and reservoirs, which only allow about four months' water in the year. The cost of the hydraulic plant, with tail-races and reservoirs, may be set down at about from £1,600 to £2,000. The yield of gold, although less than was obtained in early years, is still very satisfactory. With the improved appliances for getting through a large quantity of stuff, the ground still pays remarkably well for working.

A considerable population is still engaged in alluvial mining on the Upper Shotover and terraces, some of whom are doing very well. On Monk's Terrace, opposite the sandhills, N. M. Innes has been working for about twenty years, and has still got very rich ground, which is easily worked, being only about 30ft. in depth; but the supply of water is limited, there being not above six months' water in the year. J. McLeod has been at work in this district since it was first opened, and is still making fair wages; but this is due to the system of hydraulic sluicing, which makes water do the work which in former years was done by manual labour. At Stony Creek Terrace W. L. Davis has taken up a mining-lease of fifteen acres, and has been engaged during the last twelve months in constructing a water-race; instead of fluming the gullies on the line of race the water is conveyed in a siphon made of malleable-iron pipes, which are all manufactured on the ground. Mr. Davis discovered very rich ground on Yates's Terrace while constructing his water-race, which he is now working, as well as continuing the construction of the other works in connection with the water-supply for the ground originally intended to be worked.

*Mount Criffel.*—This is a field where one of the most recent discoveries of deposits of auriferous wash-drifts has been made. Very little was known of its existence as a gold-field until about twelve months ago, although the prospectors discovered gold in this locality about eighteen months previous; but the ground being at a high elevation, or about 4,000ft. above sea-level, where there is no water available for washing the dirt but in the spring months of the year, when the snow melts, and mining operations can only be carried on about six months of the year, owing to the large amount of frost and snow during the winter months, it requires to be rich ground to pay for working. The prospectors of this field were Messrs. Wilson, Halliday, and Beatie; and before they could be certain whether the ground was of a payable character or not, they had to stack the wash-dirt in the summer months, and wait until the next spring before water could be got to wash it. The first season's washing gave them about 300oz. of gold; but last season they were not successful in getting the snow-water to wash the dirt that they had stacked the year previous, owing to not having taken the precaution of covering the wash-dirt with sods. The frost got a complete hold of the loosely-stacked material, freezing it in one solid mass; and before it was thawed sufficiently to wash, the snow-water was gone. They are, however, constructing a water-race from the Luggate Creek, which they expected to have completed before the winter set in. There were at the time of my visit about sixty miners on this field, most of whom were making good wages; but the great drawback is the want of water. The mode adopted for washing the dirt by the most of the miners is this: The wash-dirt is hauled to Luggate Creek, where there is a good supply, or to a small gully on the top of the range where dams are constructed capable of holding about one sluice-head of water for two hours. At the latter place four parties of miners use this water at the same time, each party picking it up after the other has used it; so that by the time it reaches the fourth party it is in a very muddy state. However, with this mode of working the miners are enabled to earn fair wages. Some of the parties had no hesitation in showing me their earnings. One party, Moylan and Hawthorne, are doing extremely well: they have four men employed, and after paying all expenses from the proceeds, they have each over £20 per week to themselves. The wash-drift where a large portion of the gold is obtained from is an old deposit of quartz drift-wash, having all the pebbles greatly rounded, indicating that at some remote period it had been brought there by a stream of water. In some of the claims large trees of petrified wood are lying amongst the wash-drift near the schist rock. Judging from the fracture of those petrified trees, they must have been Manuka at one time. The depth of ground