

ROUGH RIDGE.

Gimmerburn.—A company with a capital of £7,000 has been formed to construct dams for the storage of water on the Rough Ridge, and to work ground that has been held for the last twenty-four years and is known as the Garibaldi claim, which could not be worked for the want of water. Tenders have been accepted for the construction of the first dam.

Great Eastern Company.—This company was formed some time ago, and took up ground formerly held and worked by the Homeward Bound Company. After carrying on prospecting operations for some time they discovered a shot of gold in the lode, and since October last 820oz. of gold has been obtained, representing a value of about £3,000. This has enabled them to pay a dividend of £200, or one-third of the paid-up capital of the company. The total quantity of quartz crushed was 400 tons. This gives an average yield of 2oz. 1dwt. of gold per ton. One parcel of 100 tons gave at the rate of 3oz. of gold per ton. It is said that there are four different lodes running through this company's ground. The main one, on which the company are working, is highly mineralised, containing a large percentage of iron-pyrites, with zinc-blende through the stone. In such stone as this it is impossible to save anything like a fair percentage of the gold by the ordinary crushing-battery process. The large amount of sulphur in the pyrites will carry away a great deal of the fine gold with the water which will not even be found in the tailings. According to assays made by Professor Black of the tailings it showed that the loss was equal to about 2oz. of gold per ton.

This company and the Progress Company, whose ground adjoins, have arranged to place their properties in the London market, for which they want £50,000, part to be taken in fully paid-up shares in the new company and part in cash. From the Progress Company's mine 80 tons was crushed and yielded at the rate of 1oz. 17dwt. of gold per ton. The lode is from 18in. to 2ft. wide.

Although these companies have, at the present time, a good prospect of a shot of payable stone, the value set upon the properties seems to be exceedingly high. We want outside capital to develop the quartz-mines in the colony; but we also wish to make certain that the properties placed in the English market will pay a good return for the money invested; and unless companies are floated on such a basis as will admit of this being done, we may never expect to find capitalists willing to embark their money in mining ventures here. A few companies may be floated on a fictitious basis, and a few individuals make money by them, but the ultimate result will be ruinous to the mining industry in the colony. Careful investigations should be made by mining experts of good standing having a knowledge of the auriferous lodes occurring in different parts in this colony, and the value of the properties offered to outside capitalists should be ascertained by them. If this were done there would be a far greater guarantee that the ventures offered would be payable undertakings.

Serpentine.—The Golden Globe Company are constructing a low-level adit on a lode about 280ft. below the place where auriferous quartz was worked on the surface. The adit is now constructed for 900ft. In this distance several shots of gold have been passed through, aggregating about 100ft. in length, and, according to the prospects that are got in these shots, the quartz is estimated to yield from 10dwt. to 2oz. of gold per ton. Turnbull and party sunk a shaft on this lode for 40ft. from the surface, but at that depth the amount of water there was to contend with prevented sinking operations from being continued. From this shaft some stone was obtained which yielded 4oz. of gold per ton.

MOUNT IDA DISTRICT.

Naseby.—The whole of the auriferous workings here are carried on by hydraulic sluicing. The old ground on the Naseby side of Hogburn is getting pretty well worked out. Attention is now given to the ground in the vicinity of Spec. and Home Gullies. At the latter place there are a few very good claims, but, with the exception of a few parties who are using iron piping, thereby utilising the whole available head of water, the ground is being worked in such a primitive manner that it would have to be very rich to pay. I observed some of the claims were worked by men picking down the face, and then running the stuff away afterwards with water. In close proximity to this a head of 100ft. could be obtained if pipes were carried up to the water-race, which would do three times the amount of work with far less labour.

A company or party of miners have taken up a claim in the bed of the Hogburn, directly above the place where the road crosses from Naseby to Kyeburn, and are working it on the hydraulic-elevating principle; it is said to give good returns for the labour and capital expended.

Hyde.—The alluvial drift-wash terraces in the vicinity of Hyde are pretty well worked out, as far as they will pay, and attention is now being given to the discovery of quartz reefs in this neighbourhood. A large quartz lode was discovered in June last at the Mareburn, and known as the Mareburn Reef. The prospectors—McAuley, McNally, and party—have obtained, from trial crushing, nearly 2oz. of gold per ton. The reef is about 5ft. wide, and it has been traced for a distance of nearly two miles from the prospectors' claim; in this distance it crops out on the surface for about five hundred yards. The reef has been cut through in several places, and auriferous stone found distributed through the whole width of the lode. This promises to be a valuable discovery; the extent and width of the lode showing that it is one well worthy of being prospected, and in which good shots of gold are likely to be found. It need not be expected that the lode will carry payable auriferous stone continuous for the whole length; but it is likely to have several runs or ledges carrying payable stone. As the alluvial ground gets worked out, no doubt more attention will be given to the discovery of auriferous lodes, which are really the permanent mines of the colony.