

which is now down 100ft. below the false bottom they were originally working on. A few colours of gold have been got in one of the layers gone through, but nothing payable for working has yet been struck. The difficulty in sinking this shaft is the quantity of water to contend with, and, as there is about two-thirds of a sluice-head to lift, it is possible that the present pumping appliance—namely, a jet-pump—will not be capable of raising the water from a great depth, and this will necessitate pumping machinery being erected before the ground can be tested.

WAIMEA.

There has been a large quantity of gold obtained about the Waimea; but now the ground is getting worked for a long distance back from the creek, and the creek-bed largely filled up with tailings. The fall for hydraulic sluicing is beginning to seriously interfere with working the ground advantageously. The most of the claims are worked with water from the Government water-race; but, owing to the difficulties there are to contend with here, the yield of gold is small for the number of men employed. At the present time the water-race is being extended to command new ground at the head of Waimea Creek, which, when completed, will open up a much larger field for sluicing operations to be carried on.

KANIERI AND RIMU.

There are a considerable number of miners employed in the vicinity of Kanieri, Blue Spur, Back Creek, and Rimu. At the latter place about the same number of miners are employed as for the previous year, but no new ground has been opened, nor the lead traced for a greater distance in a southerly direction. The Prospecting Association sunk thirteen shafts last year in this locality, having an aggregate depth of 859ft., and also constructed 208ft. of prospecting drives, without meeting with much success, the total expenditure upon this work being only £206. Recently I have received intimation that gold has been discovered in payable quantities for working near the Ross Road, in the vicinity of Ogilvie's. A shaft has been sunk, and a layer of drift—3ft. 6in.—passed through, which prospected at the rate of 1gr. of gold to the tindishful of stuff; the wash-drift from this layer went 1dwt. 2gr. to the load.

Ross.

There are still a considerable number of miners employed about Ross in working the auriferous drifts, and also scattered along the different ocean-beaches along the coast between this and Jackson's Bay. There is a large area covered with auriferous drifts in the locality of Ross, and some very rich ground has been worked on the deep levels on the flat. These will no doubt be again opened up, when larger pumping machinery is erected to drain the ground; but at the present time the ground is held by the Ross United Gold-mining Company, who have not sufficient capital to place machinery thereon, and they are merely working the top levels on tribute. The quantity of gold obtained in the immediate vicinity of Ross last year was 4,271oz., valued at £17,078.

With regard to the south portion of Westland, coarse gold has been found in the beds of the Mokihinui, Wataroa, Waiho, Cook's, and other rivers, a considerable distance back from the ocean-beach, but no workings of any extent have been carried on inland; and, until this portion of the colony is better opened, and more facilities given by way of communication and the transmission of cheap and regular supplies, we can never expect to have a large population, nor much prospecting done in this locality.

OTAGO.

Next in importance to the West Coast is Otago. The quantity of gold obtained from this field last year was 105,531oz., representing a value of £423,527, and about 5,063 miners were employed in working the alluvial drifts, of whom about 1,573 were Chinese. There are very few places within the Otago goldfield where alluvial drifts exist that do not contain gold. The principal gold-mining centres are Maerewhenua, Mount Ida, St. Bathans, Tinker's, Tuapeka, Clutha Valley, Bannockburn, Cardrona, Shotover, Nevis, Waikaia, and Orepuki, including Round Hill.

MAEREWHENUA.

At Maerewhenua there is a considerable area of auriferous ground, on which about seventy-four miners are employed, but very little of this area can be worked with the available water-supply that can be brought on to the field. During the last year the Maerewhenua River was proclaimed a watercourse for the deposit of tailings; but it is very