

it would amount to £353 12s., and the value of gold got from the under-current for this time is £320, which nearly pays the wages of the workmen. Before the under-currents was used this character of gold was entirely lost. The total yield of gold from this claim last season was 600oz., representing a value of £2,400.

*Mountain Race Company's Claim.*—This claim adjoins the northern boundary of Ewen and McConnechie's ground, and has the same run of the old quartz-drift or granite-wash going through it. In former years portion of this quartz-drift was worked, and also the alluvial auriferous drift-wash which joins the quartz-drift and extends into the flat from the range. During last year this company opened out on the southern boundary of their claim on the quartz-wash, which they are working to a depth of about 100ft.; but the quantity of water available, and the head, which is only about 120ft., is not sufficient to break up the cemented portions of the drift, and run large quantities away. The tail-race being cut at as low a level as can be obtained, it does not admit of under-currents being used; but the manager, Mr. Greenbank, informed me that it is the intention of the company to raise the level of the tail-race for some distance back from the face, so as to get sufficient fall for under-current gold-saving tables to be placed. At the time of my visit there were five men employed in this claim. The quantity of gold obtained during the last season was 450oz., representing a value of £1,800.

*Undaunted Company's Claim.*—This adjoins on to portion of the northern boundary of the Mountain Race Company's ground; but there is none of the quartz-drift lead in this claim. All the ground is composed of the ordinary alluvial drift-wash. The ground on which the Excel water-race was constructed on this claim proved to be exceedingly rich; consequently the company made arrangements with Mr. Ewen to carry the water in his high-level race, and this allowed them to wash away the ground. They formerly had a first right of seven sluice-heads of water for the Excel water-race; but, on shifting this right higher up the creek, the Warden reduced their first right of water to six heads. By having the water carried in Mr. Ewen's race it gives them about 480ft. of head. A less quantity of water, therefore, will do more work at this elevation than the seven sluice-heads they formerly had at the low level. Instead of paying a rent to Mr. Ewen for conveying the water in his race, he is allowed a certain percentage of the available water, he having the second right out of the creek: that is, when there are only six sluice-heads of water in the creek he gets two sluice-heads, and the Undaunted Company gets four; when there are eight heads in the creek Mr. Ewen gets two and a-half heads of the six; and when there are fourteen sluice-heads in the creek he gets the half of the first right of water. The ground they are working is about 60ft. in depth; and eight men are employed in the claim. The quantity of gold produced last year was 700oz., representing a value of about £2,800.

*Sugar-pot and Deep Lead Claims.*—The Sugar-pot Claim, owned by Reed and party, is about as rich ground as there is at Tinker's; but the supply of water to work it is a very poor one, being only about four sluice-heads, and variable according to dryness of the season or otherwise; as for instance, during the season before last they only had six weeks' water; but the last season being very favourable for supplying water, they have had a supply for about from seven to nine months. During last year they amalgamated with the Deep Lead Company, giving the latter company one-sixth share in the claim. This Deep Lead, however, cannot be worked without a good supply of water at a high elevation, as all the material will have to be elevated. There are nine men employed in this claim. The yield of gold last year has been about 500oz., representing a value of £2,000.

*Matakanui Company's Claim.*—This claim joins the Undaunted Company's ground, and the auriferous wash-drift is similar in character, only the ground, being further into the flat, cannot be worked by ordinary sluicing into a tail-race. The top portion of the ground is sluiced off and about 20ft. in depth of the bottom portion elevated by means of a hydraulic-elevator. There are far more stones in this claim than in any of the others, which have to be shifted and stacked in the worked-out ground, requiring additional labour to be employed. The company have a water-race from the Matakanui Creek, which terminates at about 130ft. elevation above their workings. The supply of about eight sluice-heads of water is tolerably constant, which allows the claim to be worked steadily, with the exception of the winter months during the frost. There are ten men employed in the claim. The yield of gold last season was 800oz., representing a value of £3,200.

There being a fair supply of water last year the whole of the claims at Tinker's have given good returns, the seven principal claims producing last year 3,350oz. of gold of a value of £13,000. The number of men employed in the claims which produced this gold was forty-four, and, taking the value of the produce, it gives an average of £303 10s. 11d. a man per annum. To give an idea of the value of water on this field, the Undaunted Company during last year purchased a water-right for four sluice-heads when it is available from Shepherd's Creek, about six miles from the Matakanui, for £1,250; this is merely for the right of water out of the creek. There will be the expense of constructing a water-race in addition to this to bring the water into Tinker's. The same water-right was purchased a few years ago for £350.

The only other claim being worked in this locality is one by Messrs. Shannon and Barron; but they have very little water, and, having to conserve it in a dam, only continue sluicing during the time the dam is emptying. These men are, however, said to be making wages.

There is a large extent of auriferous ground in the locality of Tinker's and Matakanui, if water could be brought on at a sufficient elevation to work the ground. The number of men that can be profitably employed on this field is governed entirely by the available quantity of water. The claimholders have got a survey of a dam-site made by Mr. R. Brown, the County Engineer for Maniototo, near the head of Thompson's Creek, which, if constructed, would augment the supply considerably. In wet weather there is a large quantity of water in this creek which cannot be utilised, and if conserved would give a tolerable steady supply to all those who hold water-rights from the creek. The plans were shown me at the time of my recent visit, but nothing definite was settled whether a reservoir would be constructed at this place or not.