

King Solomon Claim.—(18/7/91): A second shaft is sinking to cope with the heavy water at flood times; at present they are pumping with 9in. pipes. The main drive extends 140ft. along the gutter, showing clearly the water-worn channel cut in the bed-rock. This company have had good returns, and are at present employing eleven men.

GENERAL.

The gold in this field is coarse, and some of the claims are doing remarkably well. The drawbacks are heavy water to contend with, and the narrowness of the lead. The sinking runs from 40ft. to 120ft. I also inspected the Lucky Hit, Nelson and party's, Te Ore Ore, Pride of Creek, Wairarapa, Just-in-Time, Long Time, and Never Surrender claims, which are worked by private parties, and do not call for special mention.

Seddon's Terrace, Back Creek.

I visited this to inquire into a fatal accident in

O'Leary and Party's Claim.—(15/8/91): On the 4th August William Mohr and Donald McDonald were working in the face of their drive, and had undermined a large stone which was not propped in any way. Mohr had gone underneath it when it came away, killing him instantly. This class of accident must be expected as long as men will not exercise sufficient caution.

The following claims were also inspected when I was in the district:—

Beattie and Party's Claim.—(15/8/91): Worked by drive 500ft. long, 3ft. 6in. wide, and standing well. At present blocking out, with building well up. Washdirt about 6ft. 6in., lying on false bottom.

Silcock and Party.—(17/8/91): Tunnel 600ft. long. Very little blocking-out done, as not payable ground, but after driving a further 100ft. will connect with shaft, which is 76ft. deep, and where the drift is payable.

Ferguson and Party.—(17/8/91): This is a party of four men, working from tunnel and shaft similar to preceding claim.

Herd and Party.—(17/8/91): Drive is in about 300ft., and they are just starting blocking-out. Timber pretty high, as drift is fully 6ft. 6in., but plenty is put in. The claim is said to be payable, but not very good.

Halahan and Party.—(17/8/91): Three men, have tunnel 400ft. long connected with shaft 100ft. deep. Some blocking-out has been done, but has not proved payable.

Dean and Party.—(17/8/91): Shaft struck the washdirt at 67ft., but was continued to 80ft., and opened out there. Blocking-out principally on west side of drive. Ground payable. Air dull.

Twinnam and Party.—(17/8/91): Four men working. Shaft 50ft. deep, to which a tunnel is being driven, at present about 230ft. in. Sand roof, bad, especially at S.S.W. face, but well timbered.

Weir and Party.—(17/8/91): Four men driving for shaft. At present on Brighton bottom, showing a few colours, but as yet unpayable. Seventeen feet under the other drift.

Webster and Party.—(17/8/91): Tunnel in about 500ft., and have about 40ft. to go to strike shaft. Roof good, and ground payable.

Sargison and Party.—(17/8/91): Tunnel 460ft., and 80ft of sinking. Four men starting to take out first paddocks, so cannot say whether payable or not.

HOKITIKA.

Craig's Freehold.—(18/8/91): Dip drive worked by water-balance, and thence a level, in all 1,017ft. A thin layer of washdirt was struck at 440ft., but has not yet been worked. The second lead was struck at 900ft., and has been worked to the south some 270ft. To the north the workings extended about 500ft., but the most of this has been blocked out. Air good, an air-shaft having been sunk 110ft. deep. Average thickness of drift about 3ft., and it has paid throughout. Ten men in all working.

Stenhouse and Party.—(18/8/91): Tunnel runs in about 500ft., and is close-timbered where ground is bad, but at face standing well without timber. As there is a second tunnel the air is good. There are two layers of payable drift; the lower is the one that has been worked; it averages about 1ft. thick, and lies on the Brighton bottom.

J. Holly's Mine.—(18/8/91): This tunnel was about 360ft., but they are now blocking back, and are about 150ft. from mine-mouth. Nine feet of the drift is auriferous, but only 4ft. is taken out. Well timbered.

WESTPORT.

Hollows and Party.—(7/10/91): This is a drive from the side of the Waimangaroa River, and is not in very good condition, as it is going through old ground. The men are experienced miners, and will take sufficient care.

Gould and Party's, Milligan and Party's, Fair Maid, and Basset and Mace's claims, at Addison's, have also been visited. In the latter a hydraulic elevator is used. The main pipes are 18in., the uptake 15in., and the washdirt is elevated 18ft. Mr. Basset informs me that the head is 75ft.

Nielson and Party's Claim.—(15/9/91): This is worked from a tunnel about 800ft. long at Caledonian Terrace, and is rather poor ground. It was inspected when I was out at the adjoining claim of Corepb and Party, Mr. Nielson having complained that the latter was not being worked, while he was willing and anxious to work the ground. As no work had been done, I applied in the Warden's Court, Westport, on the 28th October, for the cancellation of the claim. Application granted.