

Hesson and party have got over a lot of ground during the year, although considerable time has been lost by two large slips in their water-race taking place, necessitating the purchase of 4 tons of steel plates for flume-boxes, and a delay of over six weeks in elevating. This is a plucky party, and, although they have had their full share of difficulties to contend with since commencing work here, seem to be made of the right material to see it through. About ten men are employed continuously, including three of the party, and the year's operations gave a return of 511oz.

Carroll and Lynch, after witnessing the advantages of the modern system, have procured, and are now erecting, a hydraulic plant. Under the old method of getting away the ground they have made substantial wages for many years, and it is confidently hoped that in the future their returns will be at least doubled.

Mitchell Brothers have also erected a small elevating plant, and are highly pleased with the consequent increase of gold.

Wilkinson has let his valuable claim on tribute, and is talking of investing his capital in and devoting his time to pastoral pursuits. Good returns are being got.

Several other parties are engaged about the Flat, and on the side of the Obelisk Range, working in smaller claims steadily with satisfactory results, and a few have been engaged in prospecting during the summer months.

QUARTZ.

Crossan and Gray's Excelsior reef seems to maintain its reputation for richness and permanency. The slow and costly method of lifting everything up the shaft has caused them to commence a tunnel, which will, on its completion, give 100ft. of backs. The last year's operations resulted in cakes aggregating 504oz. being recovered; and, although the party does not hide the results of their crushings from time to time, nobody has thought it worth while to prospect in the immediate vicinity.

Robert Symes and party, on what was known as White's Reef, have put down a shaft several hundred feet ahead of all the old workings, and succeeded in striking a splendid shoot of stone. A drive was started lower down the hill, when, at a distance of 400ft., the reef was cut. Stopping has commenced, and the battery started to crush, and some large cakes are expected before the winter sets in.

The Exhibition, on the spur lower down than White's Reef, a claim once known as Wookey and Gavin's, was again taken up a few months ago by Hyde and Henry Symes, who immediately set to work to develop the mine, but the results were not satisfactory. Eventually Mr. Symes acquired the whole property himself, and shortly afterwards succeeded in finding a large shoot of stone, which shows excellent prospects. A three-head stamper-battery has been erected and is kept going day and night.

Bald Hill Flat and the slope of the Obelisk Range form the most prosperous portion of my district, and, considering the immense field for prospecting and the large quantity of gold both in alluvial and in quartz actually being got, the wonder to me is that so few people, comparatively, are allowed to keep possession; but probably the chief reasons are that the good old pioneer digger is dying out, and that the rising generation is not favourable to the occupation, or inclined to suffer more privations and hardships than are absolutely unavoidable.

In this portion of my district, generally, mining presents a go-ahead appearance; there are more men employed in the pursuit, more capital invested, and more gold is being got than for many years back.

During the year nine licensed holdings and special claims were applied for, embracing 301 acres, while twelve were granted, including 334 acres; 34 complaints were heard and determined; and 159 ordinary applications were dealt with. The goldfields revenue collected, £543, exceeds that of the preceding year by £90, and the quantity of gold obtained, as nearly as can be ascertained, amounts to a little over 9,000oz.

ROXBURGH.

The Roxburgh Amalgamated Company, with two elevators going, is getting a fair amount of gold. The best ground appears to be nearest the river, to which part of the claim operations have been confined for some time. During the year 1,358oz. were obtained, out of which the shareholders divided £728, and a similar amount was spent in raising the wall of the reservoir at Lake Onslow, the additional water-supply from which it is hoped will enable the manager to keep two elevators working continuously.

The United Hercules Company have not fared so well during the last year as was hoped, and for some time no work has been done. It was generally supposed that a lead of gold existed further back in the flat, but fruitless efforts have been made to trace it. 665oz. were obtained during the first nine months of the year, out of which a dividend of 1s. was declared, amounting to £600; but, as against that, the contributing shareholders have been called upon to refund £275.

Messrs. Ewing and McConnochie, who purchased the rights of the Hercules No. 2, have been working steadily, with fair results, but the ground is very stony, and difficult to get away, and probably the claim is only about paying expenses.

Telford and party, on the east bank of the river, are doing fairly well, as also are Loudon and party in the adjoining claim.

Haughton and party, who took up a portion of the Commissioner's Flat, originally held by the company of that name, are doing very well by ordinary ground-sluicing. When the river is high, as it has been for some months past, great difficulty is experienced in keeping the tail-box clear; but, despite this, the men are making good wages.

Smith and party have lately taken up a licensed holding on the river-bank, near Baldwin's Ferry, which they are working with the Shingle Creek water. The ground is very rough, but the prospects are encouraging.