

*The Victoria Reef, at Nenthorn.*—The Fowler Brothers have lately sunk a shaft, 34ft., on to a small leader—an off-shoot from the main reef—and are now driving on it. The stone prospects fairly well, and is thought to be payable. They will have to cart the stone to Weeks's battery, a distance of two and a quarter miles. The shaft is quite dry.

*The Eureka Quartz-mine.*—Messrs. Mills and Sons are sinking a shaft close to the old workings in this mine. They are down about 30ft., and intend to continue it another 80ft., to see how the reef looks at that level.

*The Island Block Gold-mining Company.*—The manager, Mr. Rawlins, was away from home at the time of my visit, therefore I had no opportunity of getting any details of last year's work, or the result of the washings in the several places sluiced away during that time. I was unable to recognise the exact spot where sluicing was being done twelve months ago, and therefore could not even guess at the area of ground put through the boxes. The tailings appear to be scattered all round, over solid as well as worked-out ground, apparently to avoid what is supposed to be poor places. By this plan of working there is a probability of leaving behind and covering some fairly payable ground. The depth of the workings is from 45ft. to 48ft., nearly all gravel. The last paddock washed out was about twenty yards square on the bottom, and yielded about 130oz. of gold. At the present time the jet raises the wash 18ft. into a sluice which discharges into the worked-out ground, at the lower end of which the water only is again thrown up to the surface by a second jet. The pressure-gauge registers only two-thirds of the calculated pressure, thus showing a loss of one-third in friction.

*Island Block Extended Sluicing Company's Claim.*—Since my visit twelve months ago a considerable extent of ground, parallel to and including the main county road on the east side of the river, has been sluiced away. The length of the strip may be from 8 to 9 chains. The sluicing plant has been shifted and fixed on the east side of the old line of road, and a new opening made on some purchased land. The road has been temporarily deviated on the solid ground, on the east side of the present workings, and the tailings are now being cast into the old workings on the line of the old county road, where the filling has to be made to the original level of the road, and again made fit for traffic. The new opening had not bottomed at the time of my visit, but was supposed might be 25ft. The quantity of water generally used is thirteen heads; but that quantity has not been available for some time past in consequence of the exceptionally dry summer. It is thought the land lately purchased may keep the men employed for the next nine months or more, if the ground proves to be payable. Fairly payable ground is believed to exist close to the land lately purchased.

*Mr. Ewing's Sluicing Claim, Roxburgh.*—A very large block of ground has been sluiced away since Mr. Ewing commenced operations near the river. A very large block of the high terrace has been sluiced away for many chains back, where the wash carries a very great number of large blocks of schist-rock, most of which have to be broken up in order to remove them out of the way of sluicing operations. There appears to be very little explosives (if any) used to burst up the large blocks of stone. The most unweildy lumps are generally split up with gads to a handling size, and then hoisted to one side by a handy crane. The fact of there being so many large rocks in this claim necessitates the employment of from six to eight extra men to keep the sluice constantly going. On some goldfields the wash in this claim would be considered most promising-looking for carrying gold in payable quantity, but I am of opinion the bulk of the gold in the Clutha Valley did not come down with the earliest river-wash. I fear, therefore, notwithstanding the wash being likely-looking, the yield of gold is not likely to be what I could wish it to be for the sake of the enterprising owners, who deserve handsome returns. Back in the terrace the bed-rock rises in benches toward the hill-side, and is, where now being worked, considerably above the ordinary river-level. There were ten men working in the claim at the time of my visit (February last). Since then I have heard that the manager has estimated the cost of his present sluicing operations at 1½d. per cubic yard. If this is only approximately correct, it shows what very poor ground can be made to pay under good management.

*The Hercules No. 1 Sluicing Claim, Roxburgh.*—A strip 2 or 3 chains wide, and parallel with the course of the river, but some distance back from it, was being sluiced off at the time of my visit. The wash shows on the terrace side of the paddock many large blocks of schist-rock, some of which have to be broken up to a convenient size to enable the men to move them into the worked-out ground. The wash generally does not look so promising as that in Ewing's claim; most of it is too fine and sandy, and has generally a hungry look.

*The Amalgamated Sluicing Company, Roxburgh.*—An enormous quantity of material has been sluiced away during the past year. There appears to be two jets constantly going, and, as the bulk of the stuff is very fine, one can readily understand how quickly the ground is passed over. One jet is working near the manager's residence, and the other is following the terrace not far from the river. It is said the claim has lately been paying fairly well. I do not think the payable ground will extend very far toward the very high terrace.

*The Bald Hill Flat Sluicing Claims.*—(21/11/94): Alluvial mining on the flat is quite lively just now, in consequence of several sluicing companies having lately started the hydraulic-jet system of working the ground. The flat is now being worked on a face nearly its full width, from behind Kemp's Hotel up to behind Burton's Hotel, with very good results. The claim behind Kemp's was washed up yesterday, in order to shift the plant upwards to the face, and the yield of gold was 100oz., which, considering the area of ground passed over, is very good. The gold may be classed as coarse, and easily saved. I was surprised to find the bottom on which the gold-bearing wash rests to be soft sandy clay, and the wash purely local, as is also the gold. I think this very remarkable, since a large area of the Clutha River wash is to be seen on the ridge between Bald Hill Flat and the Clutha River, quite handy, hundreds of feet above the flat and the present river-bed.