

During the past year water was lost over the dams on eighty-three separate days, and during that time the total quantity of water lost would have given a full supply for the field for seventy-one days if it could have been impounded. The supply of water during the first six months of the year was more than sufficient for all requirements, and during that period a large quantity of water was lost over the dams. During the last six months the supply was very short—in fact, shorter during that period than it has been for years past.

Considerable repairs had to be made to the head-race tunnel in May, and twenty-four sets of new timber had to be put in. A portion of the race between the inlet end of the head-race tunnel and the lower dam had to be timbered. The 30in. steel syphons have required constant repair, and a large number of them have had to be replaced by new iron ones. Portions of the steel syphons still in use are in a very bad state, and will require to be replaced by new iron pipes at an early date.

In order to do away with the necessity of continuing to use the great length of steel syphon, I propose to supply the claims now being supplied from the tank at Dunedin Flat from the Kapitea Hill Race. In the present syphons there are sufficient iron pipes to reach from the Kapitea Hill Race to the vicinity of the claims now being supplied from the Dunedin Flat Tank. If this alteration is effected, about 2,000ft. of the 30in. steel syphons can be done without, and, if any of the pipes are fit for use again, they can be used in repairing the single steel syphon which will be left.

The Kapitea Hill Race has been extended a distance of 38 chains, and from this race water will be supplied to six claims now at work, and will also be available for the supply of water to No. 4 main tail-race and the proposed No. 5 main tail-race. The No. 4 main tail-race has been driven and timbered a distance of 2,340ft., of which about 2,000ft. has been boxed and blocked and otherwise fully completed. A start has been made on the No. 5 main tail-race, which is intended to work about 60 acres of ground on a continuation of the Shamrock Lead, between the Long Tunnel Company's ground and the Hokitika Road.

I have, &c.,

ALEXANDER AITKEN,

Manager, Water-races.

The Under-Secretary of Mines, Wellington.

No. 19.

Mr. RODERICK MURRAY, Manager, Mount Ida Water-race, to the UNDER-SECRETARY of MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Naseby, 4th May, 1895.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the Mount Ida and Blackstone Hill Water-races for the year ending the 31st March, 1895 :—

MOUNT IDA WATER-RACE.

The total sales of water from this race during the year amounted to £1,067 7s. 6d., and the expenditure on maintenance for the same period £1,008 14s., leaving a credit balance of £58 13s. 6d. The total cash received was £1,287 9s. 8d., the difference shown being accounted for by payments made of arrears. On account of the system of payment in advance being adopted at the beginning of the year, free water to the amount of £236 1s. 11d. was supplied. Free water was also supplied, to assist in opening new claims, to the amount of £38 19s. 11d. The total value of water supplied from the race during the year was £1,342 9s. 4d. The average number of miners supplied with water from this race was 60·75, and the approximate quantity of gold obtained by parties using water from the race was 3,574oz., valued at £13,759 18s. On the 10th July the water was turned off on account of the frost, and turned on again on the 13th August; two more days were lost in cleaning the race at West Eweburn Sideling; for the rest of the year the water was on continuous. During the time the water was off I had the East Eweburn Tunnel retimbered. The race for the year has been kept in good order by the maintenance men. The year has been extraordinarily dry, and from middle of December to the end of March there has not, on an average, been half a supply. No prospecting has been done in the district during the year.

BLACKSTONE HILL RACE.

The total sales of water for the year from this race were £136 5s., total cash received was £138 16s. 7d. This race, from where it crosses the Mount Ida Race to C. Rose's dam, in Pegleg Gully, was cleaned out during the year, at a cost of £36 16s. Like the Mount Ida, this race was very short of water for about four months. The average number of miners supplied with water from this race was seven.

I have, &c.,

R. MURRAY, Manager.

The Under-Secretary of Mines, Wellington.