

The workings in King Solomon's Mine are between 80ft. and 90ft. in depth, and, being situated in the valley near the creek, are subjected to a considerable influx of water. The largest body of the water comes in through a stratum of loose drift, about 40ft. from the surface. The volume that came in at this level became so great that the pumps and water-wheels which the company used for working the mine were unable to successfully cope with it. An impervious stratum was found below where the water came in, and about two years ago an experiment was made to dam back the water in the shaft, which for a certain time perfectly succeeded, and mining operations were continued. Recently, however, the puddling gave way, but this has been repaired, and at the present time the company are getting good returns. Sufficient work has been done in this mine to prove that the run of gold is going more under the township than the people in this district originally thought was the case when the Golden Gate and Alice Fell Companies sunk their shafts. These companies always thought that the lead would run much nearer the present bed of the creek than it is actually proving to do.

Davies and Carr's claim, which is the only sluicing claim here, is said to be still giving fair returns. These workings are apparently in an old slip which has come down from a higher level, and probably, if the side of this range was prospected, terraces of similar auriferous wash-drift would be found.

A prospecting association has been formed at Mahakipawa which took up some ground on Mr. Cullen's freehold with the view of prospecting by boring; and recently Mr. Oliver, the secretary, wrote to me inquiring as to the best appliances to use for this purpose. Water-augers have been successfully used in Victoria and New South Wales in boring through clay-beds and drifts, and they are suitable machines for testing such ground as the association has taken up. Depths of over 400ft. below the surface have been reached with this auger. In boring through sand and clay, Mr. Lucas, manager for J. Kitchen and Sons, Melbourne, stated, in reference to boring a well, that, on commencing to bore, a bed of coarse sand 19ft. thick, with water in the ground for 16ft. of this depth, afterwards a bed of hard clay, was met with for 45ft. A depth of 64ft. was reached in seventeen hours. A second layer of fine drift-sand was pierced below the clay-bed, and on getting through this layer for about 11ft. in thickness a further clay-bed was gone through for about 10ft., when 2ft. 6in. of coarse gravel and pebbles was met with. This shows that these machines are capable of boring through alluvial drifts. These machines are manufactured by Wright and Edmonds, engineers, Melbourne, and the cost of one of the machines complete, with all tools and appliances, with tubes to bore to a depth of 200ft., was £327, at the time of the last exhibition held in Melbourne in 1889.

Several parties have been prospecting between Pelorus and Queen Charlotte Sounds, but no discovery of any importance has yet been made. It is said that some rough pieces of gold have been got in White-pine Gully, and gold has also been obtained in Duncan's Creek; but, owing to the sinking being of a considerable depth, the large quantity of water to contend with, and not having pumping machinery of sufficient capacity to lift the water, mining operations in this locality have been for a considerable time suspended.

NELSON DISTRICT.

Collingwood.—Although this was the first gold-mining district opened in the colony it has never maintained a large mining population. Latterly, however, it has begun to attract more attention, as it has been found that there are extensive areas here covered with auriferous gravel, which can be made to give good returns if a systematic method of working is adopted. Some very rich ground was found in the early days at Golden Gully, where there is a large deposit of quartz-drift similar to that which is found at St. Bathans, Otago.

No doubt there are still considerable areas of this drift in the Collingwood district which would pay for working if an ample supply of water was brought on to the ground. There is an extensive area of quartz-drift in what is known as the Quartz Ranges, where some miners have been for a number of years making a good livelihood by the use of water conserved in small dams, and sluicing the ground on a very limited scale.

All the water from the Parapara River is already taken up by the Parapara Hydraulic Sluicing and Mining Company; but at the Boulder Lake there is one of the finest sites in the colony for the construction of a large reservoir at a minimum cost, and the water, passing through a high, narrow, rocky gorge, would command all the auriferous terraces on the side of the range in the Collingwood district.

Parapara Hydraulic Sluicing and Mining Company.—This company has just completed the whole of the works, and commenced sluicing operations in the Maori section of the property, and also in a special claim on McCartney's Hill.

Nothing can at present be said as to the payable nature or otherwise of the ground, as it will take some weeks to open up and thoroughly test it, but judging from the yield of gold obtained from a few days' work in opening out the ground it is likely to become a very valuable mining property. The whole of the works have cost about £25,000, and one of the shareholders informed me that £5,000 has been expended in other mining properties.

A syndicate of Wellington gentlemen first commenced operations here, and entered into an arrangement with Mr. Travers to work ground on his freehold, which is situated on Parapara Flat. The syndicate at first contemplated getting water from the Onekaka and Puriwhakaho Creeks; but upon a survey being made it was found that those streams would not give a sufficient quantity of water to work the ground on the elevator principle in a satisfactory manner. The only other water which could be obtained was from the Parapara River; but the Red Hill Company and a party of miners in Glengyle Gully held rights for all available water in this river, except in extremely wet weather, when there was plenty of surplus water to be obtained, but not sufficient to insure a constant supply for carrying on hydraulic operations on Mr. Travers's property.