

ROSS DISTRICT.

Zala's Claim.—The only work carried on has been driving a tunnel to cut the reef at a deeper level. The tunnel is subsidised by Government, and is progressing very slowly, the ground being wet.

Gagliardi and Sons are also driving a tunnel in their claim by the aid of a Government subsidy.

Cedar Creek.

Alpha Claim.—Very little work was done during the year. The two men employed were lately at work in laying a tramway and repairing the battery in order to test the reefs.

BATTERY RETURNS.

The following statement, compiled from the monthly returns furnished by owners of quartz-crushing machines under section 308 of "The Mining Act, 1891," shows the quantity of stone crushed and the yield of gold from the various mines for year ending the 31st March, 1898:—

Name of Mine.	Ordinary Quartz crushed.		Gold.		Approximate Value.	
	Tons	cwt. qr.	Oz.	dwt. gr.	£	s. d.
Progress Mine	1,285	0 0	509	19 0	} 23,505 15 0	
Tyrconnel	61	0 0	97	14 0		
Sir Francis Drake	1,010	0 0	349	7 5		
Sir Francis Drake, tributers	107	0 0	49	11 9		
Keep-it-Dark	3,281	0 0	1,131	7 12		
Wealth of Nations	932	0 0	189	1 8		
Globe	2,360	0 0	963	18 0		
United Alpine	4,093	0 0	1,795	2 5		
Green and party, tributers	66	0 0	39	3 0		
Rodder and party, tributers	20	0 0	20	6 0		
Big River	170	0 0	263	9 0		
Golden Lead	480	0 0	196	9 22		
A1, tributers	14	0 0	58	17 0		
A1, tributers	22	10 0	58	10 0		
A1, tributers	10	0 0	21	15 0		
Victory	255	0 0	322	7 12		
	14,166	10 0	6,066	18 1		

Tailings (Cyanide Treatment).

Name of Mine.	Quantity.		Yield.		Value.	
	Tons	cwt. qr.	Oz.	dwt. gr.	£	s. d.
Big River Cyanide-works	3,975	0 0	860	17 18	} 3,525 0 0	
Cumberland Cyanide-works	1,600	0 0	483	15 1		

The foregoing returns, showing 7,411 oz. 10 dwt. 20 gr. of gold, made up of 6,066 oz. 18 dwt. 1 gr. from ordinary quartz and 1,344 oz. 12 dwt. 19 gr. by the cyanide process, is short of last year's return by 2,806 oz. This falling-off is chiefly from the mines owned by the Consolidated Goldfields Company, the Big River, Sir Francis Drake, and Keep-it-Dark Mines, whilst the United Alpine and Golden Treasure show an increase. The decrease in the first-named mines is largely due to the nature of the work carried on during the year. Extensive exploration works were in hand, and much of the quartz won from the workings was tested to ascertain the value of the different blocks opened. Next year the tonnage that is to be treated will be very much more, as the new sixty-stamp mill can be kept going. Much cannot be said about increase in other mines, although recent discoveries tend to an increase in the yield from the Keep-it-Dark.

The new battery at the Cresus Mine will also add to the production when a fair start can be made.

A great deal of exploration work must be done to enable other mines to develop the reefs so as to have a reserve of payable stone to work on.

OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND DISTRICT.

Quartz-workings are carried on in isolated parts of this extensive district from Skipper's and Macetown in the north to Preservation Inlet at the extreme south-western portion of the Middle Island. Attention is again being directed to some of the older mines, and fresh operations in mine development have been commenced.