

13 ft. 6 in. diameter, and 4 ft. deep. The vats and sumps are constructed of $\frac{3}{8}$ in. steel plates, firmly riveted together. Three bands of $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. angle-iron go round each vat. The bottoms of the vats have a fall of 3 in. from the outside to the centre, where the opening is placed, to run out the sand after treatment. The vats have all received, both inside and outside, a good coating with a mixture of coal-tar and kauri-gum. Messrs. A. and G. Price, of the Thames, supplied the plant. The company's battery having a low situation, being very little above the level of the Inangahua River, the tailings require to be lifted, and for that purpose a wheel has been constructed, 22 ft. in diameter, the motive-power being water. The elevating buckets are placed on one side of the wheel, and a box leading the tailings from the battery drops them into the buckets as they revolve, whence they are conveyed along another box and distributed in the vats. The whole of the plant is very compact, and will, when finished, be most complete.

No. 2 South Keep-it-Dark Mine (Area, 47 acres 2 roods 32 perches).—There is no manager at present in this mine. It is worked from a shaft, the depth of which is 500 ft.; and the greatest depth of workings below the surface, 475 ft. There are three levels opened up, at the following depths: 100 ft., 300 ft., and 475 ft. Prospecting operations have been carried on during the whole of the year. The principal work was the driving of a cross-cut to the west from the old line of reef on the No. 3 level, which is 475 ft. in depth from the brace. This drive, which is now in 516 ft. from the old line of reef, is directly crossing the strata. The rock passed through was of a mixture of sandstone and slate; one or two narrow belts of soft slate intermixed with pug have been passed through, but, with the exception of a few small leaders, no quartz, so far, has been met with. A 10-horse-power portable steam-engine (Marshall) is used for winding, and is valued at £260. No milling machinery at present in use. A trial crushing of quartz—12 tons—yielded 4 oz. 7 dwt. 12 gr.; value, £16 18s. 10d. The number of men employed during the year was five (on contract).

Golden Treasure.—This mine has been reopened by the Anglo-Continental Gold-mining Syndicate (Limited), with Mr. James Naismith as mine-manager. The shaft from which the mine is worked is 308 ft. in depth, and divided into two winding and one ladderway compartments. The work principally done was repairing No. 1 level. Five men were employed.

The following mining properties—viz., the Wealth of Nations group, the Golden Fleece group, the Caledonian group, the Welcome (Boatman's), and Progress—are controlled and managed from the office of the Consolidated Goldfields of New Zealand (Limited), at Reefton. I am indebted to Mr. E. W. Spencer, the company's engineer, for the following description of those mines, machinery, methods of working, and gold-extraction:—

"Wealth of Nations Group (which comprises Wealth of Nations, Energetic, and portions of the Gladstone, Beaconsfield, and Undaunted).—During the period under review 811 ft. of driving and cross-cutting has been completed, mainly with a view to opening up new ore-bodies, also trying to locate what is known as the Energetic body of stone at both the 350 ft. and 500 ft. levels. Attention is now again concentrated at the bottom of the new shaft, which has recently been unwatered, and excavating for the chamber for No. 6 level is now proceeding, besides sinking this incline shaft a little deeper, so as to give sump-room. The bottom of the new shaft has been connected with an old winze, which will help the ventilation. Chambers have been formed at both the 200 ft. and 350 ft. levels for the incline shaft. Hoisting is at present done by the old water-wheel hoist, but there is new gear on order which will be operated by water under great pressure. No milling has been done on this property during the year. Seventeen men were employed on the 31st March.

"Golden Fleece Group (comprising the low level and adjoining leases): During the earlier portion of the period under review our attentions were restricted to the No. 6 level in the Golden Fleece, where we were drifting along north, and followed a good track until we holed into the old workings of the Ajax. The total drifting on this level is 623 ft., and a cross-cut west 62 ft. In the low level itself we have done a lot of drifting and cross-cutting to explore the country, which we are doing with machines. The total drifting to date is 557 ft.; cross-cutting, 226 ft. Thirty-five men were employed on the 31st March—six rock-drill men, six rock-drill helpers, three compressor drivers, two timber-men, and eighteen truckers, &c.

"Caledonian Group (Larry's Creek): Work on this property can only be termed prospecting. The Argyle tunnel was worked until the air became too poor. During the summer months our attentions have been devoted to surface-prospecting, which in this densely wooded district is necessarily very slow and tedious work.

"Welcome Gold-mining Company, Limited (Boatman's): The principal work done here has been on the Welcome No. 5 tunnel, where we have drifted 253 ft. on the line of reef, cross-cut 246 ft., raised 149 ft., winze sunk 100 ft. No. 2 and No. 4 levels have been retimbered 173 ft. At the present time we are engaged in opening out No. 6 tunnel, and catching up the water to prevent it getting back to the Fiery Cross Mine, and thence to the Just-in-Time. The Just-in-Time shaft is shortly to be overhauled and reworked. Specimen Hill (low level): This tunnel has also been repaired and retimbered for a distance of 1,600 ft. We are now putting in air-boxes, and hope to start drifting south as soon as this is done. A small crushing of 60 tons was put through the Fiery Cross mill for 108 oz. amalgam, 33 oz. gold. Fifteen men were employed in March.

"Progress Mines of New Zealand (Limited): This property is situated four miles south-east of Reefton. In extent it is 527 acres; and the mine itself, at the present time, is managed by James Martin. Work is carried on through two vertical shafts, shaft A being 820 ft. from surface to No. 6 level, and shaft B is 927 ft. from surface to No. 7 level, which at the present time is our bottom level. The B shaft is, however, now being sunk down to the 8th level (100 ft. vertically below No. 7). We are now down far enough, and the 8th chamber will be commenced as soon as the shaft is down about 10 ft. below the chamber. The bulk of the mining timber is lowered from No. 1 level in the old shaft, also from Progress No. 1 level in the new shaft, both of which are adit-levels. This is a small consideration, as it avoids carting all the timber up to the brace of the respective shafts. Work is carried on in No. 4, No. 5, No. 6, and No. 7 levels. Also, coal is brought through the Progress battery-level, and eventually hoisted up B shaft to the boilers. In the mine several