

of Lyell. The lease has since been surrendered, and the plant is lying idle. The Tyrconnel party, not being able to work with satisfactory profit on their leader claim at the Eight-mile, removed down to the old Croesus Mine, within a short distance of Lyell. A small amount of prospecting was done here, and one crushing was taken out. The result was, however, too poor to warrant work being continued, and the party have now suspended operations.

The Alpine Extended Gold-mining Company have, during the year, done a large amount of work. The mine has been fully manned, there being on an average fifty-two men employed in the mine alone, and the company's twenty-head stamper battery has been kept almost continuously at work. The stone treated has, however, been of low grade, and has left but a very small margin of profit over the working-expenses and the cost of carrying out the necessary development and prospecting works. Stopping has been carried on in the Nos. 9, 10, and 11 levels, the bodies of quartz ranging from 4 ft. to 20 ft. in width. A small amount of prospecting has been done in the upper levels, and the No. 11 level has been connected with the main shaft. Large quantities of quartz have been developed in almost every direction in which driving has been done, but so far the quality of the stone has been of low grade. The company is, however, now extending its No. 11 level north, in which direction prospecting operations have led the company to expect better results.

Alluvial.

The usual amount of alluvial mining is being carried on along the banks of the Buller River and its several auriferous tributaries, among which the Matakita and Maruia offer splendid advantages for the efforts of individual miners. There are a large number of small claims which are being continuously worked, and from which the holders are obtaining a comfortable living, but no unusually rich finds have been reported during the year.

The Dee Creek Gold-sluing Company (No Liability) has expended a considerable sum of money in bringing on water to work an auriferous terrace at the back of Della Vedova's accommodation-house at Three-channel Flat. A small amount of sluicing, however, proved the ground to be not sufficiently good to pay a company, and the claim has been let on tribute to McGregor and party.

The Cuzco Gold-mining Company recently formed in Wellington, is working a deep flat on the right side of the Buller River, opposite Three-channel Flat, and near the mouth of Thompson's Creek. About half a dozen men have been employed in bringing on water and driving. The company so far appear satisfied with its prospects.

At the Maruia Mr. George Walker has been working steadily at his sluicing-claim with fair success.

Taking the district as a whole, a good healthy state of prosperity has been existent during the year, and there has been a marked absence of the booming and rushing so common, as a rule, on the goldfields. With a return of prosperity to the quartz-mining properties, and a judicious investment of capital in dredging, this district should continue to supply its full quota to the gold-production of the colony.

CHARLESTON.

During the year past there has been very little done towards the development of the mining industry. Most of the larger areas have been the greater part of the time protected, while their promoters have been arranging with syndicates to purchase the properties—the Lucinda, Lucy, and Brown's Terrace Special Claims. The two former have had an aggregate protection of twelve months since the 31st January, 1898, and the latter fifteen months since July, 1896.

The Totara Special Claim, of 26 acres, is being pushed ahead. Mr. J. M. Powell has brought in a water-race capable of carrying eight heads of water a distance of six miles; the latter portion of the distance, about 67 chains, is siphon. A large cutting, about 10 chains long, had to be made through the sound hills to bring the siphon through to the beach where the claim is opened up, and the owner is now reaping a good reward. The washdirt, which is black sand, is worked with a hydraulic elevator.

Two special claims adjoining the Totara have been applied for.

The miners working the beaches (commonly known as "beach-combers") have done very little during the last nine months, as the beach has been very poor.

The back lead still continues to be productive. No new claims have been taken up in this locality. The chief work is crushing cement in which fine small batteries are employed, the tailings from which give good returns to the "fly-catchers" in the creek into which the tailings are discharged.

The principal batteries are the Dublin City, an eight-head battery; the Morning Star, with four stamps; and the Enterprise, with four stamps. Messrs. Haxburgh and Craddock have lately erected a four-stamp battery, and are getting fair returns.

At the Four-mile the three special claims held by a German syndicate have had nothing at all done in them, and their owners are applying for permission to surrender absolutely.

At Brighton there are only about seven or eight parties at work, and the returns are poor. The terraces which were so rich and yielded such good results in the early days—1867 to 1870—now only afford a bare existence.

ADDISON'S.

At the Bendigo Claim the General Exploration Company have completed their water-races from Island Creek, a distance of five miles, with a capacity of fifty heads, and also their elevating plant, which is worked by a Pelton wheel, capable of delivering $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons per minute with a direct lift of 120 ft. They have started sluicing some months, but the results have not been made public. From the point at which it was necessary to open out a cut of some 2 chains had to be worked before getting on the run of gold. Operations are at present suspended, pending instructions from Berlin, the headquarters of the company. The works and plant on this claim