

are of a very extensive nature, having been designed and constructed with a view of dealing expeditiously with immense bodies of washdirt.

The Virgin Flat Company have had a number of men employed cutting races and preparing generally to work their alluvial claims on the flat.

During the past year Gould and party have driven 540 ft. of tunnel, moved the water-balance and hopper plant, and cut 1,000 ft. of storm-channel. They are now sluicing into the new tunnel from a fresh face, and feel confident of success.

Millikin and party have driven and boxed 450 ft. of tunnel, and have made a foundation for the water-balance, which they are now erecting. Whilst engaged upon this work they have also kept their battery running two shifts per day.

Carriday and party have been sluicing steadily throughout the year, with good results, and contemplate making alterations which will generally and greatly facilitate their operations.

Neil and party have also been sluicing almost continuously, and have recently had some very handsome returns.

The Shamrock Company's claim is let on tribute. A considerable length of tunnel has just been driven and boxed, and a lift driven by a Pelton wheel has been erected to take up stones, &c.

Sullivan and party have started a new claim at Wilson's lead, having driven a tunnel, put up a water-balance, constructed washing-tables, and repaired a large break in their principal dam.

The preliminary works required to open Halligan and party's claim are amongst the heaviest that have ever been undertaken at Addison's by a private party of miners, including a siphon flume across Dirty Mary's Creek over 700 ft. in length and 2 ft. in diameter.

Venture Gold-mining Company (Limited).—This company had the misfortune to lose the 30 ft. water-wheel which supplied power to the battery during a heavy storm that occurred about the middle of last year. The time and cost of erecting a new one considerably reduced the returns. The cement now being treated is of an average value of 1 dwt. per cubic yard. This is sufficient to show a good margin of profit, so that the company should soon be out of its present difficulty. Amount crushed during the year, 3,460 cubic yards; gold won, 205 oz.

Addison's Long Tunnel Gold-mining Company (Limited).—This company was formed in September last to take over the property of the Addison's Sluicing Company (Limited), at Gallagher's Lead, Addison's, as the latter company's capital was not sufficient to open up the claim. Operations have been steadily going on for the past six months. The returns are sufficient to pay wages and current expenses, or very nearly so. The disturbed condition of the lead has given trouble. No doubt as soon as the foundation becomes more regular the returns will improve. This claim has cost upwards of £5,000 to open up, and is owned principally by local investors. Return of gold won to 31st March, 1899, 166 oz. 16 dwt. 20 gr.

WAIMANGAROA.

The Westport Twin Gold-mines (Limited) consist of two special-claim areas at Waimangaroa, each containing nearly 100 acres. The company has recently constructed a water-race, battery, winding and driving wheels, cottages, &c., at a cost exceeding £4,500. A small quantity of stone has been crushed, but the result was not equal to the expectations of the proprietors.

Britannia Gold-mining Company (Limited).—This company is only recently formed, though the claim has been in hand for about three years, during which time prospecting has been carried on. The claim is situated at Stony Creek, Waimangaroa, and is on what is known as the "Republic" line of reef. A small battery of two 850 lb. stamps has been purchased, and contracts let for all necessary work in connection with same. The operations are considerably hampered by the difficulty experienced in getting material to the claim, though this difficulty will be somewhat lessened when the pack-track now under construction is completed. The prospecting has disclosed some 2,000 tons of stone, of an average estimated value of 1 oz. As the tunnels are extended the stone appears to get more solid and the country more regular. There are still outcrops of payable stone not yet driven on.

Nearly all the large claims in this locality have been surrendered, and very little work has been done during the year. Small parties of miners are scattered up and down the river, and are apparently making a fair living.

KARAMEA.

A few sluicing claims have recently been started at Karamea, but they have not been sufficiently worked yet to enable a reliable opinion to be formed as to whether they are likely to prove payable or not.

The Under-Secretary for Mines, Wellington.

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H. A. STRATFORD, Warden.

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Mr. Warden STRATFORD to the UNDER-SECRETARY for MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Reefton, 21st April, 1899.

I have the honour to forward to you herewith statistical returns for the year ended the 31st ultimo, and submit the following report on the Inangahua portion of the district under my charge for the same period:—

The chief feature of the year has been the completion and bringing into full working-order the extensive milling and gold-saving appliances of the Progress Mines of New Zealand, which have had the effect of very materially increasing the gold-production of the district for the year.