

of 8 ft. 3 in.; breadth, 24 ft. for the first half-chain of length, drawing in to 12 ft. thereafter; the sides of the flume are 4 ft. high, and are constructed of 4 in. by 3 in. framing with 12 in. by 1 in. planking, the whole structure being well stayed, and a suitable gangway with hand-rails provided. The wing-dam is 120 ft. in length. The piles are 11 ft. long, sunk 7 ft. into the ground, and the wall is well breasted with large stones. Heavy swinging doors are let into the wall of the dam to allow extra water to escape during a rise in the river, but in spite of this precaution one section at the head of the flume had carried away in flood-time. The area of the claim is 100 acres, but a greater part of this is a narrow gorge, and an exceptionally low river will be required before this portion can be worked. The ground is about 14 ft. deep, and very rough. The gold is coarse. An under-shot water-wheel drives a Californian pump to keep the working-paddock dry. Eight to ten men will be employed when the claim is in full swing.

WAIKAIA.

Argyle Sluicing Company's Claim, Waikaia (J. Stewart, manager).—This season has been a good one for sluicing, and the claim had not as usual been closed down during winter on account of frost. There has been little alteration to the plant since last report, but under capable management and favourable circumstances sluicing operations have been steadily conducted. The depth of the ground is 35 ft., the bottom layers consisting of heavy wash. The surface deposit consists of an accumulation of tailings from former sluicing claims on the surrounding terraces. Pressure, 330 ft. vertical head; height of lift, 32 ft. The run of gold-saving boxes is about 120 ft. long, and provided with Venetian riffles and perforated plates on top of cocoanut-matting. Nine men are usually employed.

Winding Creek Hydraulic-sluicing Claim, Waikaia.—This company made a trial of the deep ground, but found that the water-supply was totally inadequate to work the claim with success. The property is now let on tribute to a party of working-miners, who are ground-sluicing. This party has had a steady season's work.

Gow's Creek Gold-mining Company, Waikaia (K. McLean, manager).—This claim is situated about six miles up Gow's Creek. A race has been brought in a distance of five miles from the upper reaches of the creek to command an alluvial flat, supposed to contain good gold. The race proved to be a costly undertaking, as the country was entirely unsuitable for race-cutting. The company holds first rights to thirty heads of water, and if the first plant meets with success an additional plant will be put on. At present the manager is engaged opening out a paddock, and has sunk 18 ft. through water-worn schist and quartz gravels. From appearances the ground will prove very rough. About six men are employed. Vertical pressure, 200 ft.; height of lift, 35 ft. The run of gold-saving boxes is 84 ft. long, and is provided with angle-iron ripples, perforated plates, and cocoanut-matting. The race has 13 ft. 4 in. fall to the mile. Later information regarding this claim is to the effect that operations did not meet with success. A further trial of the flat was made under new management, but the gold returns did not improve and the plant was finally closed down.

Piano Flat Gold-mining Company, Upper Waikaia (F. Hamer, manager).—This is a claim of 26 acres, comprising flat and terrace ground on the Upper Waikaia River. The company has large water-rights from Cameron's and Welshman's Creeks, and a race has been cut in a distance of nine miles to a point from which it is siphoned across the river to the claim. An attempt was made to bottom the flat, but at 26 ft. the limit of the power was reached without the bottom being struck. The adjoining terrace was then attacked; material operated on, being cemented, required extensive undermining before a fall would take place, and, having a weak pressure of water, this necessitated the nozzle being close up to the face. The attention of the manager was drawn to the danger to the men arising from large falls. Operations, however, did not meet with success, and the works have been finally closed down.

NOKOMAI.

Lion Hydraulic Sluicing and Elevating Company, Nokomai (D. McGregor, manager).—Last season a paddock was taken out to a depth of 85 ft. before bottom was reached, but owing to the advancing winter further developments did not take place. The material was elevated in one lift to a height of 112 ft. There is from 6 ft. to 8 ft. of gold-bearing wash on the bottom, but the great overburden is barren. This season an attempt was being made to pump the paddock out, preparatory to resuming sluicing operations. A large slip fell from the face, carrying away the dirt-pipes, the run of boxes and trestlework being canted forward. Without making any attempt to stay or stiffen the structure, the manager and six men began to clear the gold-saving appliances out of the boxes. While they were thus engaged the structure collapsed, and the manager and three men fell with it. The manager had a small bone broken in one leg, but the other men escaped serious injury. I have since been informed that the intention is to drain the paddock and then drive out the wash, keeping the paddock dry with the hydraulic pump. This will do away with the necessity for removing the overburden.

Victory Hydraulic Sluicing and Elevating Company, Nokomai (W. Franz, manager).—This claim is situated in Victoria Gully. Last season a dam was built to improve the water-supply and enable more constant work to be carried on. Franz and two men are now working this claim under tribute.

Nokomai Gold-mining Company (Limited), (W. Robinson, manager).—No. 1 Claim: This claim is being worked systematically, and with highly payable results. The run of boxes is well put up and strongly stayed; the ground averages 45 ft. in depth, and when opened out the faces stand well. Fifteen men are employed in and about this claim. The electric light is being used for night-work.

No. 2 Claim: A dam having an area of 17½ acres has been made on Nokomai Creek. The breastwork is 40 ft. high. The ground in the claim is very rough, and requires a better water-