

ISLAND BLOCK.

Island Block Gold Dredging and Sluicing Company, Island Block.—At the end of June, 1903, arrangements with the party of tributers terminated, and the company assumed direct control over the sluicing operations. Mr. D. Weir was placed in charge of the hydraulic plant, and Mr. A. C. Perkins was appointed dredgemaster and general manager. The dredge has opened out a large paddock on the western side of the claim, while sluicing operations are confined to the eastern side; but it is desirable to evolve a scheme whereby the two systems of working may be combined in order that a larger quantity of material may be treated, and the bottom carefully cleaned up after the dredge. Much of the bottom in this claim is hard and ridgy, and therefore the dredge cannot clean it up properly. Operations throughout the year have been fairly continuous. The ground is from 40 ft. to 50 ft. in depth. Considerable expenditure is incurred in the maintenance of the water-races, dams, and mining plant. Ten men are employed in and about the sluicing claim, and seven men find employment on the dredge.

Edie and Kirkpatrick's Claim, Tallaburn (J. Kirkpatrick, manager).—Sluicing operations are still being carried on at Currie's Flat. The shallow ground and top-stripping is swept off by a splendid body of water under good pressure. The deep run of ground skirting the foot of the hill is then elevated and discharged down the tail-race into the Clutha River.

E. Curtain and F. Whelan's Sluicing Claim, Currie's Flat.—The water-supply on this claim is very poor. Very little sluicing has been done on this property for some time, as, in addition to the work of building a dam on Featherstone's Flat and extending water-race, the season has been exceptionally dry. About four heads of water will be brought on to claim in sluicing season.

Gunton's Beach Hydraulic Sluicing Claim, Horse-shoe Bend.—This property comprises a mile and a half of the Clutha River, suitable for dredging, and also sluicing areas on the adjoining banks, totalling 93 acres. There are three water-races carrying first rights to eight heads of water. The water is conserved in dams, while the claim is fully equipped with a suitable hydraulic sluicing and elevating plant. The claim was worked for some time by a syndicate under the style of "W. R. Pearson and others," but was recently sold at auction to Mr. W. Meyer of Miller's Flat, and operations will be resumed in the near future.

MILLER'S FLAT.

Golden Run Hydraulic Sluicing and Dredging Claim, Miller's Flat.—The company suspended active sluicing operations on this property when it was found that the water-pressure was too light to efficiently deal with the ground. Recently the ground has been let on tribute to P. McLoughlin and party. Nine men are employed in the claim. There are patches of good ground here and there, but the best of the flat has apparently been worked out. The company's dredge, which is at work on the river portion of the claim, is securing good returns.

ROXBURGH.

Hercules Sluicing Claim.—This plant and claim continues to be shut down.

Roxburgh Amalgamated Mining and Sluicing Company (J. H. Waigh, manager).—The mine has been in active operation throughout the year. Progressive work is a marked characteristic of this claim, which is worked with a view to efficiency and economy. The claim gives employment to twenty men throughout the year, and is one of the mainstays of the district. Operations in the past have clearly shown the varying qualities of the wash and the uneven conditions of the bed-rock. The gold-bearing wash is not evenly distributed over the flat, but poor and rich patches alternate according as the bottom rises or falls; i.e., where the bottom dips good wash is found, and *vice versa*. Two elevators have been kept going constantly, and a large amount of material has been treated. No. 1 elevator lifts the material 45 ft., while No. 2 elevator lifts 50 ft. The electric-lighting plant being used for illuminating the paddocks during night-work continues to give satisfaction.

Ladysmith Sluicing Claim (W. Donnelley, manager).—Sluicing and elevating are being conducted on the usual lines. An increased water-supply with more pressure is being brought on to the claim. Under the old system good results were obtained, and better returns are expected under the new conditions. At the time of inspection a large area of non-auriferous overburden was being stripped off in advance of the elevating plant.

Commissioner's Flat Sluicing Claim (Coulter and party; R. George, manager).—Area of claim, 22 acres. An increased water-supply has been brought into this claim, enabling more efficient work to be done. The claim is worked by hydraulic sluicing and elevating. Four men are employed.

Gothic Hydraulic Elevating Claim, Coal Creek Flat (Manuel Bros.; A. J. Manuel, manager).—This claim has an area of 12 acres, and is worked by hydraulic sluicing and elevating. Four men are employed.

Pleasant Valley Gold-mining Company, above Coal Creek Flat (John Dixon, manager).—Operations were suspended for some time owing to low water-pressure and heavy nature of material treated. Funds were not available to improve the water-supply. However, another attempt is to be made and the pressure-column will be increased in diameter. The new syndicate includes several of the old shareholders, and negotiations are being made to purchase a portion of the Hercules plant.

Butterfly Sluicing Claim, Teviot (Weatherall Bros.).—Ground-sluicing in this claim of 2 acres on the bank of the Clutha River affords employment to the two shareholders.

There are several miners working along the banks of the river near Coal Creek Flat.

BALD HILL FLAT.

Carroll and Lynch's Sluicing Claim.—A privately owned hydraulic sluicing claim. Operations are steadily conducted during the sluicing season with payable results.

Mitchell Bros.' Sluicing Claim.—A ground-sluicing claim of 2 acres, in which one man finds constant employment during the season.

J. Ewing and J. Dowdall's Elevating Claim (W. McNeish, manager).—This claim continues to yield satisfactory results to the owners, and after the working-expenses there is a fair margin of profit