

The number of men engaged under camp schemes at the end of each four weeks during the period now under review will be found in Table II in the Appendix.

The numbers shown in the table referred to above do not indicate the actual number of relief workers who are required to camp on the jobs on which they are placed as many local bodies have been employing relief labour in camps established and supervised at the expense of the local body or farmer whose land is being improved. These men are employed full time at specially approved rates, but as the allocation of funds in their case is arranged through Scheme No. 5 the number so employed is included under that scheme. Also the majority of men in receipt of subsidy under the Board's gold-prospecting scheme are required to live in tents or huts.

#### GOLD MINING AND PROSPECTING.

The number of men prospecting for gold on a subsidized basis under the Unemployment Board's schemes is not as high now as formerly. Whereas at the end of October, 1933, there were some 4,000 so engaged, this number has dropped to an average of 3,300 for the year ended 30th June, 1935. While this decrease is in line with the general decline in numbers assisted under all schemes it is indicative also of the success of the gold-mining schemes in making a fair proportion of men independent of unemployment relief. Another factor is the elimination of men who, while prepared to give this arduous work a trial, have found that they are really unfitted for gold mining and prospecting.

With the appointment of further mining engineers, and improvement in administration following such appointments, the Board's plan of progress is following well-defined lines. On the Hauraki gold-fields the Board has authorized special reef-prospecting operations with the object of discovering potential new mines. In Marlborough and Central Otago percussion drills, loaned by the Mines Department, are being used to test likely areas on a more economical basis than has hitherto been possible. Special development work on the West Coast, involving extensive shaft-sinking and tunnelling operations and systematic prospecting of more or less virgin areas, is holding out some concrete promise of success. A typical example of the arduous nature of the work, and difficulties prospectors encounter, is that of the Mosquito Creek development area in Grey County. Here the men live about 1,800 ft. above sea-level and are engaged in tunnelling distances up to 1,000 ft., or in shaft-sinking to depths of over 200 ft. This work is being carried out on elevated pakihi lands, which render the work very wet and trying. On the Mosquito area, and on quite a number of other special-development areas, three shifts per day are worked, sometimes four, depending on the nature of the work. Many of these men do not leave their place of work more than once in the year. Apart from the Christmas holiday period they work for months on end, and their enjoyment of social amenities is limited to what amusement they can make for themselves in these remote areas.

As pointed out in the last preceding report, the co-operation of the Mines Department and the Public Works Department with the Unemployment Board is being maintained. The Public Works Department has now well under way the reconditioning and construction of water-races at Humphrey's Gully, Westland, and already on this work 190-odd men are employed full-time at standard rates of pay. It is expected that the whole of the Board's outlay in connection with this scheme will be more than recouped through the permanent employment that will eventually be given to a considerable number of selected men settled on claims in this part of Westland County.

The activities of various geophysical survey parties, whose work has been made possible by the grant of £5,000 to the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (referred to in last year's report), are producing interesting results. Surveys have been made in the Otago and Southland fields, Reefton, Hauraki, and the West Coast. Valuable data have been secured throwing light on the structural and mining features of the various fields. In connection with several projects recommended by the Unemployment Board's engineers, and also with certain undertakings for which financial help has been solicited by private interests, geophysical surveys have enabled the proposed operations to be modified with consequent saving in expenditure. Geophysical methods are also being employed to facilitate the working of blacksand leads by small subsidized parties.

As a commentary on the success of the gold-prospecting schemes it should be mentioned that of the total quantity of gold exported from New Zealand during the financial year ended 31st March last (approximately 157,800 oz.) subsidized prospectors produced 8,370 oz., or 5.3 per cent. At first sight this contribution appears small, but it must be remembered that the Board keeps a record of production only while the men are on subsidy. One party alone sold 300 oz. of gold shortly after going off subsidy early in 1935. Other men have been successful in disposing of their claims to companies or syndicates, whose gold-production really ought to be credited to the Board's activities.

When allowance is made for the production of the Waihi Mines (63,335 oz. of gold during the year 1934) and of other large companies it will be seen that the addition to the national wealth, as a result of these schemes, is not inconsiderable. Although there are fewer men engaged under the scheme than there were, say, two years ago, gold-production during the last twelve months or so by men actually on subsidy is not far short of the amount produced in the previous two years. Up to the end of June, 1935, over 20,000 oz. of gold has been won by subsidized men since the inception of the scheme. This may be valued, roughly, at over £120,000.

Reference has been made in previous reports to the fact that the Board's gold-prospecting subsidy schemes (aided by the continued high price of gold) are encouraging a new generation of gold-miners in New Zealand. Evidence in favour of this contention is found in the recently collected figures referring to occupations of the registered unemployed. Out of a total of over 50,000 remaining on the register at the end of July, 1935 (including some 3,000 subsidized prospectors), only 762 showed their previous occupation as "gold-miner."