

REPORTS

ON THE

GOLD FIELDS OF WESTLAND AND AUCKLAND.

ORDERED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO BE PRINTED, 25TH AUGUST, 1870.

WELLINGTON.

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1870.

REPORTS ON THE GOLD FIELDS OF WESTLAND AND AUCKLAND.

No. 1.

The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to the CHAIRMAN of COUNTY COUNCIL, Westland.

SIR,— Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 12th August, 1869.

I have the honor to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a Resolution, passed by the House of Representatives on the 3rd instant, for certain information to be obtained in reference to the gold fields, and to request your Honor to be good enough to furnish to this office, in the month of April in each year, a statement in accordance with the Resolution, in order that the information may be compiled and laid before the General Assembly.

The Chairman, County Council, Westland.

I have, &c.,
W. GISBORNE.

Enclosure in No. 1.

EXTRACT from the JOURNALS of the HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES, Tuesday, the 3rd day of
August, 1869.

“RESOLVED—That it is desirable that the Government should cause to be laid upon the table of this House, during each Session, a Report embodying a general account of the present condition of the gold fields of the Colony, their advancement or otherwise during the preceding year, and their probable prospects; together with particulars showing the average price of provisions during the year on each gold field, the rate of wages, estimated population, and such other information as would afford a comprehensive idea of the general condition of the Mining interest in the Colony; and that His Excellency be requested to forward a copy of such Report to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies.”

No. 2.

The CHAIRMAN, COUNTY COUNCIL, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,— County Chairman's Office, Hokitika, 26th May, 1870.

In compliance with your request contained in telegram, I have the honor to transmit copies in duplicate of Reports of the Wardens, Surveyors, &c., in charge of the Gold Fields of the County of Westland, for the half-year ending 31st December, 1870.

I have, &c.,
C. Hoos,
Chairman of the County Council.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 2.

WAIMEA AND KANIERI DISTRICTS.

VERY few alterations have taken place in either the Waimea or Kanieri Districts since my last report. The population has considerably decreased, and the monthly gold returns show of course a proportionate decrease. The reasons for this are manifold, and first and foremost the failure of the contemplated water schemes may be mentioned as having greatly contributed to the present state of things. Sluicing being the principal mode of extracting the precious metal in most parts of the Waimea and Kanieri Districts, the necessity for an ample water-supply from a race such as the proposed “Kanieri Lake Water Race” is apparent. There are thousands of acres of terrace-ground which would pay well to small parties of miners, if a steady supply of water could be had, and often, in order to be able to work such terraces, would water be brought in, by the several parties of diggers themselves cutting a race for this particular purpose, if a steady supply of water could at all times be had within a few miles of their workings. In some parts, and this stands good in both districts, the hillsides are so thoroughly cut up by paltry little races that it is impossible to get a supply of half a sluice head by going a less distance than three—sometimes four—miles. The drainage from every little knoll has been registered by two or more diggers: every one in the district holds a little water-right, and very few hold enough to work their ground to advantage, and fewer still can boast of a regular supply of water. Looking at last year's returns, for instance, I find that in the Waimea District 423 head of races, of a total length of 197 miles, and in the Kanieri District, during the same time, 437 head of races, of only 169 miles in length, were registered and constructed. Considering the comparatively small area over which the workings in both districts extend, it must be apparent that so large a population as both these districts supported in days past cannot possibly find water enough for the efficient working of the ground for any great length of time by continuing the system hitherto adopted. For the working of very rich ground little water may suffice, inasmuch as miners can afford to lose some of the gold, while what is saved of it is ample to repay them for their trouble. But now the best of the ground having

been worked—and as to this being the case there cannot be the slightest doubt—the old rough ways of washing-up must be abandoned, and in order to make poor ground pay larger quantities of stuff must be sent through the boxes, and for this an abundant supply of water is required. The attractions offered by the Thames Gold Fields have certainly induced many to leave the County, but by far the greater number of those who left were driven away by the want of water for mining purposes. Cases of this kind come repeatedly under my notice; the ground is good—not supposed to be so, but actually proved to be payable—and the water for working it is not to be had.

The difficulties small parties of diggers now-a-days experience in Westland in effectually working the ground brings me to note the absolute necessity there is for encouraging mining operations on a large scale, by the granting large areas in the shape of “special claims” or “mining leases.” For many years I held a different view, but I am now as decidedly for as I was then against it. Only the very strongest reasons should induce the Government to refuse an application for a lease or special claim; for it is certain that most of the ground already worked, and the great extent of auriferous terraces still untouched, can only be profitably worked by companies. The Kanieri would have been abandoned and dead several years ago but for the “Victoria Co-operative Company,” and the “United Company;” and Tucker Flat, which for a long time has been looked upon as containing worse than “tucker” ground, will ere long be able to boast of four or five large water-wheels, if the special claim of ten acres I lately surveyed there for Rae and party be granted. They propose to erect a 50 feet water-wheel, and work the ground according to the plan pursued by the Kanieri Flat Companies; and I do not doubt but it will prove a success, and will lead to the formation of other companies for the purpose of working adjoining ground at Tucker Flat. What has been said about Tucker Flat I wish to have applied to all the other ground, creeks, gullies, flats, and terraces of both the Waimea and the Kanieri Districts. I am convinced that this is the only way to make Westland a permanent gold-producing country.

An entirely new feature in the County is the lately-discovered reefs up the Taipo River and in the Ross District. The former I visited a few weeks ago, and surveyed the five leases then applied for. The existence of a properly-defined reef has not been proved as yet; but the numerous blows of quartz cropping out along the top of Kelly's Range, six of which contain gold visible to the naked eye, warrant the supposition that a reef does exist. The prospectors and adjoining leaseholders, I am informed, are about to amalgamate, for the purpose of driving a tunnel several hundred feet below the crown of the range, and in three months hence we shall be in a position to form a correct estimate of the Taipo Reef discovery. Four leases have since been applied for, and more applications may be expected. Having had barely time to finish the survey of the leases before Christmas, I necessarily had to leave for my next visit the gathering of desirable information—such as the direction, the dip, and the position of the various quartz-blows; all these particulars I shall furnish for your information shortly. Some sort of road or pack-track to the top of Kelly's Range is wanted, and to procure good timber for the above purposes it is necessary to descend from 1,500 to 2,000 feet. Mr. O'Connor has, I presume, already reported about the best way to connect these reefs with the Christchurch Road by pack-track or road.

The principal rush during the last few months was to the supposed continuation of the Hauhau Lead, south of the Hokitika River. From the prospectors' claim I ran a line under the Hauhau Lead bearing for several miles, and about ten or twelve holes were sunk and bottomed on it, and proved duffers. Other holes were bottomed to the east and west of that line, and the terrace south of the prospectors' got by these means a very fair trial. The consequence of the failures mentioned was, that everybody concluded that the prospectors had struck a patch. So matters stood until a few weeks ago, when it was proved beyond all doubt that the lead was running along the terrace south of the Hokitika; that it had nothing at all to do with the Hauhau Lead, running in fact perpendicular to it. Since then a great extent of ground has been taken up, and Brighton seems the most flourishing of the alluvial diggings in the Kanieri District.

Of other rushes we had a few small ones in the Waimea District; the principal one of these was the one to the right-hand branch of the Waimea, near the Austrian Terrace. More than ordinarily rich the last six months seems to have been in “duffer rushes;” of these, however, enough could be learned out of the newspapers, and I therefore pass them over.

No new machinery was introduced in either the Waimea or the Kanieri District; and some of the old machinery reported upon six months ago, particularly the whims and smaller water-wheels in the Waimea District, have ceased work altogether, and others again were quiet for weeks, on account of the want of water during the extraordinary dry weather which we have had for the past six months.

With the exception of the decrease in population, things at the different mining centres in both Waimea and Kanieri Districts are the same as they were at the time of my last report, and I shall therefore not treat of them separately.

Regarding the roads and tracks in Waimea and Kanieri Districts, I have little to say. Nothing fresh has been done by the Government, and the Arahura and Kanieri Road Boards had scarce money enough to pay for a few small culverts and bridges. On the whole, however, I must confess that both districts are tolerably well supplied with pack-tracks.

The Chief Surveyor, Hokitika.

GERARD MUELLER,
District Surveyor.

Enclosure 2 in No. 2.

GREY MINING DISTRICT.

THE greater part of my report on this district six months ago will stand good at the present time, very few changes of importance having occurred in the interim. Both the population and the yield of gold are about the same; if there is a diminution, it is in the case of the latter, owing to the unprecedentedly dry season which Westland has experienced, which has told heavily against the miners in this district, who are indifferently supplied with water in the best of times. Were it not for fresh

racers having been brought in, materially adding to the supply, the decrease in the golden harvest would have been very considerable. The means of communication have somewhat improved, some ten miles of metalled pack-track having been constructed, and about the same extent of new foot-tracks cleared. Further information will be found in the notices of the different localities.

1. *Greymouth and South Beach*.—The old Beach leads continue to support a moderate population scattered along the Coast from Greymouth to the Teremakau, in most cases re-working old ground with the aid of a good water supply. Inside of them are the Stony Lead, the Paroa Lead, the old Lagoon Lead and Sunday Flat. Stony Lead has progressed greatly since my last report, having now been traced up to the South Town Belt, and a string of extended claims has been marked out to that point. Several of them are drained by means of water wheels, but the greater number by means of tunnels taken in from the sea-beach. A lease of ten acres on this lead, taken up by the Greymouth Company, has resulted in failure. Several parties of miners are at work within the borough (by authority of the Borough Council), in the hope of striking a continuation of the Stony Lead. The old Lagoon Lead is now all but abandoned; but a new lead has lately been struck to the north of it (slightly further inland and extending to the Saltwater Creek), which has at present a busy aspect, some fifty men being at work taking in tunnels, &c., after obtaining a satisfactory prospect. This I call Paroa Lead. Sunday Flat, near the Teremakau, is still being worked by a few parties, who rent their ground from the proprietor, the workings being situated on what is known as Hawdon's Section. Beach-combing has not been very prosperous of late, one reason being the absence of S.W. gales, which usually leave behind them payable deposits of black sand.

2. *Rutherglen*.—Nothing fresh.

3. *Welshman's, Limestone, and German Terraces*.—Nothing worthy of note, except that the population is still falling off. A good permanent supply of water might revive the prosperity of this locality, as there is a good deal of sluicing ground.

4. *New River*.—The Eight-mile and Maori Creek have rather declined in population, though good steady work is being done at both places. They were considerably affected by the rush in September to No Name Creek, a tributary of the New River falling into it about one mile and three-quarters below Marsden. Here a well-defined lead has been struck, of a very similar character to the Eight-mile workings, and I am informed that over twenty claims are on gold. A township (Nemona) has been laid out on a small flat adjoining, whereon a dozen business places have been put up. The lead runs N.E. and S.W., and has been traced across No Name and Cement Creeks; it is therefore very probable that the diggings will extend. A few occasional parties are at work at Cameron's, Cockeye's, Trishman's, and Cockabulla. In the neighbourhood of Liverpool's the population has increased; two strong parties have set to work to take in tunnels 900 and 1,300 feet long, to try for a southern continuation of the old Hungarian Lead, many parts of which were so rich in the vicinity of Wood's Creek. The shorter one is just completed, and the lead struck. It may be noted that the proper bearing and inclination of the tunnels were furnished to the miners by myself, after taking levels along the old lead, and the result proved their correctness to a few inches. As there was no fall to spare, the expense of a second tunnel has probably been saved by this precaution, as without it the tunnel would, there is little doubt, have been taken in too high. Sundry parties in Liverpool's, Reilly's, Redjack's, and other adjacent creeks and gullies, make up the population hereaway to about one hundred.

5. *Greenstone*.—The pulse of this formerly very torpid place has been quickened into a little more life by the Hohonu Water Race, which was completed in September. The previously all but deserted Duke's Terrace contains a good number of claims at work, including eight extended claims and a lease of ten acres granted to the Race Company. Most of the water available (not much more than half the estimated quantity, in consequence of the drought) in the race is let, and there is abundance of sluicing ground commanded by it, which has however a great drawback in the great number of large stones in the wash dirt requiring to be moved by hand. The diggings across the Creek, and up and down it, support a moderate but rather diminishing number of miners. Quartz reefs are known to exist in this part of the Grey District, but the rough and almost trackless nature of the country deters prospecting.

6. *Arnold*.—At Maori Gully matters are somewhat dull, owing partly to the short supply of water. The tunnel of Prior and party, which is probably the heaviest piece of work undertaken in Westland, is about two-thirds completed, being now, after eighteen months' work, taken in about 2,000 feet out of 3,000 feet required to reach their ground in Riverton Gully. It is five to six feet high by three feet wide, with a boxed-in drain under the tramway, and is mostly cut through sandstone reef, in which an interesting variety of remains in the form of shells, fossil, wood, &c., was found. A special claim of five acres has been granted to this party in consideration of their great outlay of time and labour on this work. Stillwater Creek has an increased population, there being now some fifty diggers at work to about half a dozen six months ago. The nature of the work is sluicing, and with a better supply of water, the locality would be likely to improve still further. The pack track lately made by Peter Neilson up this creek is very useful—in fact indispensable to the miners.

7. *Roads, Tramways, and Tracks*.—The means of communication are improved since my last report to the following extent:—

1. *Metalled Road, eight feet wide, from the Coal Mines to the road previously made from Maori Gully*.—This instalment of the Grey and Arnold road is of great service, and has materially reduced the prices of stores at Maori Gully.
2. *Metalled Pack-track, four feet wide, from mouth of Cockabulla Creek to Clifton, two and a half miles*.—The making of this has reduced the price of carriage to Clifton at least £5 per ton.
3. *Rutherglen and New River Tramway*.—This line is now open to Marsden, about three and a half miles, and is a great acquisition to the district.
4. *A Walking Track* has been cut by the Road Board from Marsden to Cockabulla on the the Terrace, with a foot bridge over the New River, at its termination. This opens communication for pedestrians between the Upper New River and the seaboard, irrespective of the state of the river.

5. *A Walking Track* cut by me from Marsden to Pounamu (Greenstone) by a direct route.

6. *A Pack-track up Stillwater Creek* for about five miles, cleared ten feet wide, done by private enterprise.

8. *Roads required*.—The two most urgently needed are those to the Coal Mines and to Clifton. To the latter place a line has been surveyed by Mr. Rochfort, *via* the Omotumotu Creek and the Limestone Saddle. If this should not be carried out forthwith, I suggest the desirability of making a metalled pack track from Marsden to Cockabulla, a distance of about three miles, along a flat terrace. This would complete the communication for horse-traffic between Greymouth and Clifton, independent of the river. If it is thought desirable to make a road from the Eight-mile to the Greenstone, this could be done in continuation of the above, by the portion made by the Road Board between Cockabulla and Clifton, more easily than by the Omotumotu line. Should the No Name diggings extend further south, it will be desirable to connect them by a metalled pack-track with Marsden to the Greenstone, if circumstances warranted it..

To the Chief Surveyor.

W. M. COOPER,
District Surveyor.

Enclosure 3 in No. 2.

WAIMEA DISTRICT.

SIR,—

I have to report that, during the half-year just closed, the Waimea District has fairly maintained its reputation as a gold field, and that I cannot observe any material diminution in the population, which I roughly estimate at nearly 5,000.

The most noteworthy event has been the discovery of a quartz reef at the Taipo, which I have every hope may yet, when fairly tested, prove a valuable discovery.

Five mining leases have been applied for, and the usual deposit of £20 has been made in each case: Weymouth Roberts, Edwin Blake, Nicholas Walsh and Co., William Jenkin, John Cunningham.

I may mention that half a ton of stone has been brought to Chesterfield for crushing, the return yielded being at the rate of 17 dwts. to the ton. Some of the companies are now commencing to drive tunnels, and I hope they may be rewarded for their labour and enterprise. The locality is very difficult of access and remarkably rough, and a considerable time must yet elapse ere the richness or otherwise of the reef is proved, and I have no doubt that those who have taken the business in hand will leave no stone unturned to trace a lead.

There were one hundred and twenty cases tried in Court and twelve in the field, of which the largest number were tried in October, and litigation appears to be again on the increase.

I must not omit to mention a large and admirably constructed water-race, which has been brought down to the Beach from Flowery Creek; it is composed throughout of a substantial flume, and it is at one point lowered in a covered box for the purpose of passing beneath the tramway line, the water again forcing itself to its level above the line on the western side. The water-wheel in connection with this race is now ready to put up, and will soon be at full work. These were constructed at a cost to the party of upwards of £1,000. Thence along the beach scattered parties are at work, and most of them are doing very fairly. Further north again, two new water-wheels have lately been constructed, and are now at work.

At Blake's Terrace, where there was a small rush, the population has considerably increased, and many of the miners hold double claims, on account of the difficulties to be contended with from excessive water and other causes.

The road to the Greenstone has been completed, and is a great boon to the inhabitants. A coach now runs regularly on it at moderate fares. A good punt, too, has been placed on the Teremakau River at the crossing point, thus forming an admirable means of communication between the Waimea and Greenstone districts.

There have been eleven surveyed extended claims granted, and twenty-five double areas registered, under clause 14, section 18, during the six months. In the latter cases I have obliged applicants to post notice papers instead of granting the area on my own *ipse dixit*, thus allowing the public an opportunity of judging of the merits of or opposing the application.

There are some good claims still at work at Piper's Flat, where a patch of new ground has recently been opened. The various terraces on the Scandinavian line still maintain a good population, who are doing fairly, and some of whom are engaged in the construction of substantial races. The same may be said of Upper and Lower German Gullies, as well as Callaghan's and Maori Gullies.

A few good portions of ground have lately been opened up in the right-hand branch of the Waimea, near the Big Dam, and scattered parties are still working in the neighbourhood of Redjack's. The whim party at Callaghan's are now on good coarse gold, at a depth of about 130 feet; they have displayed perseverance and energy. Shamrock Terrace, and thence along to and including Italian Gully, is a locality where what is termed "wages ground" is always to be found, and large portions about here are still scarcely scratched, or altogether unprospected.

It is difficult to arrive at anything like an approximate calculation of the yield of gold, and I understand that some persons take parcels down to Hokitika by tramway or otherwise.

The Waimea District includes so large an area, embracing so scattered an area, that to particularize the workings and yield of each gully or terrace would be altogether beyond the limits of an ordinary report; but, in conclusion, I think I may safely say that there has been a visible improvement in many portions of this district during the last part of the year just closed.

I have, &c.,

Chairman, County Council, Hokitika.

C. C. SCHAW, Warden.

Enclosure 4 in No. 2.

TOTARA AND OKARITO MINING DISTRICTS.

SIR,—

A great change for the better has taken place in mining affairs since my last report, and although there has been no substantial result, yet everything tends to show that the large deposits of gold in Jones' Flat are likely to be extracted, as now the great obstacle, water, is about to be removed. The Ross United Drainage Company have their extensive machinery on the ground. This comprises two engines of an aggregate power of ninety horse. The other steam engine "Morning Star" 16-horse power, "Scandinavian" 14-horse power, "Ross Extended" 12-horse power, and "Band of Hope" 16-horse power, which are lying idle so long, will soon be all at work, besides some new companies which have just been started.

There are two other steam-engines at Donoghue's, the "Cræsus" and "Golden Gate," of 45 and 10 horse-power respectively. As yet no satisfactory results have been obtained from them.

Besides steam power, there are six water wheels in the district for mining purposes; three at Redman's, one at Donoghue's, one at Sailor's Gully, and one at Guardian Flat.

Of horse-whims there are about sixty; this will include those at Bowen and Donoghue's, and more than half these are almost idle, waiting for drainage. Ground-sluicing is principally carried on between Ross and Donoghue's, where they are now washing away on the most approved principle, and with good result, large areas of ground which in earlier days afforded a rich harvest to others, who by means of sinking and tunnelling picked out the most valuable portions. Still good patches are met with, as in Blockade Gully a short time since a nugget of 10½ ounces was picked up.

In the district the population is principally between Ross and Donoghue's. From Donnelly's Creek to the furthest gully where gold is worked up the Totara, the population is about forty, and at Redman's it may be set down as seventy. The total population is about two thousand.

The large district extending from the Mikonui to the Totara, on the southern and northern slopes of the Greenland Range, is nearly deserted through a want of water, as the ground is of such a nature that without a systematic way of working no good results can be obtained.

A large addition to the water supply of this district was expected by the construction of the Mikonui Water Race, twenty-three miles long, carrying fifty Government heads of water, from the head of the Mikonui, supplying water at an elevation of 600 feet above high water mark at Ross, and commanding the entire district between the Mikonui and Totara Rivers. But this project has been abandoned for the present, owing to the depressed state of the district for some time past.

Besides a number of smaller races, the Totara and Jones' Creek Amalgamated Water Race Company supplies twenty Government heads of water to the gullies between Donnelly's Creek and Donoghue's. Yet this amount is not sufficient for the requirements of the miners. Five and a half miles of head races, and three miles of tail races, have been applied for during the half-year; and during the same period seventeen extended claims, nine mining leases, and five mining surveys have been applied for.

Some excitement has been caused by the discovery of gold-bearing quartz reefs on Bowen's and Cameron's Creeks, and six leases have been taken up on the line of reef between Redman's and Black's Creeks. Reports of their immense richness have been afloat, but nothing definite is yet known. The driving, &c., connected with them is proceeding very rapidly.

In the Okarito district a great change for the better has taken place; and as the mining is nearly all confined to beach workings, I will deal with them separately, and go southward to Bruce Bay.

South of the Mikonui River, where the beach workings may be said to commence, there are a good many miners scattered along as far as the Waitaha; but this would seem to be a very unsettled population, merely going there to spend the time till something more remunerative could be had. Between the Waitaha and Wanganui Rivers there are twenty-five miners at work, making what they consider moderate wages. The difficulty of getting a supply of water for sluicing purposes has been a great drawback to these beaches, which otherwise are all capable of supporting a large population.

Between the Wanganui and Saltwater there is only one party, who are bringing in a water race, about five miles long, from a creek at the back of the Saltwater Lagoon to the beach south of the Little Wanganui River. These men have acted with a great deal of perseverance, and worked at this race for about eighteen months under many difficulties.

There are no gold workings of any importance between these and the Five-mile Beach, south of Okarito, the old Three-mile having of late been deserted.

Since the prosperous times of about four years ago, the Five-mile Beach has not presented a more lively aspect than at present, as a good many of the large companies formed to work the land in a systematic manner have commenced operations, and seem to be pleased at the results obtained.

I am not in a position to say what the population of this beach is, as it has been increased very much lately by an influx from the North.

There are miners scattered along the Coast in small parties as far as Gillespie's Beach, on which are located some forty miners, and all doing pretty well. The absence of a good water supply is here as much lamented as on any other beach on the Coast. A small donkey-engine was lately introduced for the purpose of raising water.

At Bruce Bay there are about twelve miners, exclusive of Maoris, who are all doing a little, and some making fair wages.

The only inland workings in this district are up the Waikukupa and Omoerua Rivers, where a couple of parties are at work constructing a race and water-wheel.

On the Five-mile Beach there are six powerful water wheels, but the supply of water from the two large races already constructed is inadequate. A company is being formed, with a capital of about £20,000, to supply this want; and it is proposed to construct a race about ten miles long from the Totara, a branch of the Waiho, carrying about fifty heads of water.

Six extended claims, four mining leases, and one special site, have been applied for and completed

during the half-year. Two more extended claims on the Five-mile Beach have been applied for, and one on Hunt's Beach, which are not yet surveyed.

The Chief Surveyor, Hokitika.

J. R. BROWNE,
District Surveyor.

Enclosure 5 in No. 2.

OKARITO DISTRICT.

SIR,—

Okarito, 31st December, 1869.

In compliance with your instructions, I have the honor to submit the following observations on the state of the Okarito during the last half-year; and I believe it will be gratifying to you and the Council, that, as regards population, yield of gold, and revenue, it has far exceeded that of the previous six months, and taking the whole year, there is an improvement on that of 1868, as shown by the returns annexed.

1. *Population*.—The population of the district, comprised within the boundaries commencing south bank of the Wanganui River and terminating at Bruce Bay, consists of 461 souls (as per annexed table A), which shows an increase of 101 since June last. The population was then estimated at 360; and comparing the whole of the present year with that of 1868 it is also in its favour, the population having during the latter year fluctuated from 456 to 308, and during 1869 from 322 to 461. I may further say it is gradually increasing. In addition to the above there are twenty-two Maoris, mostly residing at Bruce Bay.

2. *Diggings*.—With the exception of four men up Cook's River and two up the Waikukupa, the diggings are still entirely confined to the sea-beaches; and although during the last six months there have been several other parties up these two rivers, some of whom did exceedingly well, yet as the gold is found mostly in patches, or in the bed of the river—difficult to work in consequence of floods—there is little inducement for men to remain.

The principal diggings are still at the Five-mile Beach; and lately, what with some fresh ground that has turned out better than was expected, and with the increased facility of obtaining water, renewed impetus has been given to mining operations in this locality. Four mining leases have within the last two months been granted, one of five acres, and the other three of ten acres each; the former one is in active operation, but the three latter have not yet commenced being worked.

The Alpine Race Company are enlarging their race, to enable them to afford a greater supply of water to the Beach. At Hunt's Beach the population has been gradually increasing, and those there are doing very fairly. A mining lease of five acres of ground has just been applied for, which, if granted, the applicants intend to work with steam power, having during the present month landed a steam-engine of about 10-horse power on that beach.

At Gillespie's Beach an extended race of upwards of five miles in length, and to convey fourteen sluice-heads of water, has just been commenced by a party of miners who have come down on purpose to do so. When finished it will draw a larger population to this beach, which only requires a good supply to make it payable.

The large extended Water Race, about fourteen miles north of this, between the Saltwater Creek and Little Wanganui River, which has been in course of formation for upwards of twelve months by a very enterprising party of six miners, is nearly completed; it is five miles in length, two miles of which is fluming, in some parts upwards of thirty-eight feet in height, and intended to carry twelve sluice-heads of water. They have been to very considerable expense to carry out this undertaking, having erected a saw-mill worked by water power. When this race is finished, it will enable the beach in the neighbourhood to be profitably worked, and support a population of between sixty and seventy people.

The expenditure of labour and capital by working miners in bringing in extensive races like the two last named is a convincing proof that these beach diggings are worth working, provided the supply of water is abundant.

3. *Machinery*.—At the Five-mile Beach there are seven large wheels and one saw-mill, all worked by water power. At Saltwater Creek, one saw-mill, worked by water power; and at Hunt's Beach there is a steam-engine of about 10-horse power.

4. *Prospecting*.—I regret to say there are no prospecting parties out; in fact all the miners are occupied with beach digging, and do not appear inclined to face the hardships of prospecting inland so long as they can make fair wages on the beaches.

5. *Revenue*.—The yield of gold during the current half-year has been 4,559 oz. 1 dwt. 4 gr., of which 2,706 oz. 10 dwt. have been shipped, 1,999 oz. 3 dwt. 22 gr. sent overland to Hokitika by four storekeepers in this district, and 340 oz. are ready for shipment, and were intended to be sent by the "Waipara," had she called on the 22nd instant, on her return trip from the South. This shows an increase over the last half-year of 2,011 oz. 8 dwt. 10 gr. The yield during the whole year has been 7,106 oz. 13 dwt. 22 gr. as against 6,948 oz. in 1868, showing an increase of 158 oz. 13 dwt. 22 gr. (*vide* return annexed marked B). The Customs Revenue for the current half-year amounts to £1,228 7s. 7d., an increase on that of the last half-year of £207 19s. 7d., and taking the whole year the excess is £462 5s. over 1868 (annexed return C). The Gold Fields Revenue for this half-year is £719 12s. 6d., an increase of £371 10s. over the last half-year, whilst taking the whole year there is an increase of £318 9s. over that of 1868 (annexed return marked D). Notwithstanding that during the present year only 4,767 oz. 10 dwt. have passed through the Customs here, and that there has been a consequent loss of £249 duty on 1,999 oz. 3 dwt. 22 gr. sent overland, which of course will go in favour of Hokitika, the total of this year's revenue exceeds that of 1868 by £598 17s. 6d., although in the latter year 6,222 oz. of gold passed through the Customs and paid duty at Okarito, and only 726 oz. were sent overland.

6. *Provisions*.—As it may be of interest to Government to know the price of provisions throughout the district, I annex a list, marked E.

7. *Prospects of the District.*—As regards the future prospects held out for mining operations in this district, I reported last year that I believed them to be as good as ever they were, and my anticipations have been realized, judging by the population, yield of gold, and revenue collected. I am still of opinion there is no fear to anticipate any decline; for taking into consideration the extent of auriferous beaches which only require a good supply of water to be worked to advantage, there is no doubt the district will support not only the present but a large population for some years to come—to say nothing of what may be discovered inland, when greater facilities are afforded to the miners for prospecting the interior by cutting tracks.

There are indications of quartz reefs in several parts of the district, but hitherto there has been great apathy shown to develop them.

As regards the division of the district, commencing on the south of Bruce Bay, the population is still very small. I believe there are three men at the Paringa River, some twelve or fourteen at the Haast, and two or three at the Gorge River; but as the steamer “Waipara” did not call here on her return trip this month, I am unable to state the exact population. I do not think, however, that they exceed twenty in all; still I would recommend the Government to continue the bi-monthly Steam Service, as it is the only means of inducing miners to open out this part of the country. I have no hesitation in saying that were a good water-race brought into the Haast Beach, it would support 100 miners.

Further, there is good land down South which will eventually be taken up if facility is offered to the people to do so. But should the steamer be stopped, you will close a coast-line of between eighty and ninety miles in extent, whose beaches are known to be more or less auriferous, and entirely prevent the development of this part of the country, which I believe holds out as good prospects as any portion of it.

I cannot conclude this Report without offering a suggestion, which I do most respectfully, and at the same time I trust I may be pardoned in doing so; but I have for some time past felt it would be highly desirable to form one Mining Board for the whole of the County, meeting once a year to frame and revise the Mining Regulations, so that the wants and defects which may have been felt during the year could be rectified. I speak from my own experience in this district—had such a Board existed there would have been the opportunity of amending some of the present regulations, which are found not suited to beach diggings; and in the case of the Mining Lease Regulations it would have prevented a great deal of the opposition offered to the granting of leases in consequence of some of the rules requiring to be amended.

The Chairman, County Council, Westland.

I have, &c.,
M. PRICE, Warden.

TABLE A.

ESTIMATED POPULATION in the OKARITO DISTRICT on 31st December, 1869, distributed as follows:—

Okarito Township	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	66
North Beach	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	25
Three-mile Beach	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Five-mile Beach	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	230
Waiau Beach	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Waikukupa River	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Gallaway's Beach	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Gillespie's Beach	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	30
Cook's River	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Hunt's Beach	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	58
Bruce Bay	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	461

N.B.—In addition to the above there are 22 Maoris, residing mostly at Bruce Bay.
The population during the last six months has fluctuated from 360 to 461. For the half-year ending 30th June, 1869, fluctuated from 322 to 360. For the first half-year, 1868, fluctuated from 456 to 308. For the second half-year, 1868, fluctuated from 308 to 322.

RETURN B.

RETURN of GOLD in the OKARITO DISTRICT for the Half-year ending 31st December, 1869. Also showing that for the Half-years ending 30th June, 1868, and 31st December, 1868.

Period.	Amount of Gold Exported.	Amount of Duty Paid.	Gold sent overland to Hokitika.	Gold ready for shipment, 31st Dec., 1869.	Total amount of Gold obtained in District.	Remarks.
1869. Half-year ending 31st Dec.	Oz. dwt. 2,706 10	£ s. d. 338 6 3	Oz. dwt. gr. 1,512 11 4	Oz. dwt. 340 0	Oz. dwt. gr. 4,559 1 4	The half-year ending 31st Dec. shows an increase of 2,011 oz. 8 dwt. 10 gr. over that of the previous half-year. The gold taken overland was sent by two storekeepers from Okarito, one storekeeper from Hunt's Beach, and one storekeeper from Bruce Bay.
Half-year ending 30th June.	2,061 0	257 12 6	486 12 18	...	2,547 12 18	
Total for 1869	4,767 10	595 18 9	1,999 3 22	340 0	7,106 13 22	

REPORTS ON THE GOLD FIELDS

RETURN B.—*continued.*

RETURN of GOLD in the OKARITO DISTRICT, &c.

Period.	Amount of Gold Exported.	Amount of Duty paid.	Gold sent overland to Hokitika.	Gold ready for shipment, 31st Dec., 1869.	Total amount of Gold obtained in District.	Remarks.
1868.	Oz. dwt.	£ s. d.	Oz. dwt. gr.	Oz. dwt.	Oz. dwt. gr.	N.B.—The yield of gold for 1869 shows an increase of 153 oz. 11 dwt. 22 gr. over that of 1868. There appears, in 1869, a decrease in the gold duty from that of 1868 of £181 16s. 6d. This is accounted for by the difference in the quantity sent overland between the two years. There is a loss of duty in 1869 of £249 on 1,999 oz. sent overland.
Half-year ending 31st Dec.	2,487 2	310 17 9	575 0 0	...	3,062 2 0	
Half-year ending 30th June.	3,735 0	466 17 6	151 0 0	...	3,886 0 0	
Total for 1868	6,222 2	777 15 3	726 0 0	...	6,948 2 0	

NOTE.—This Return does not include the gold taken or sent up by the steamer "Waipara" on her bi-monthly trips after she leaves Okarito for the Southern places of call, as there is no account of it given at Okarito, but it is taken up direct to Hokitika.

RETURN C.

CUSTOMS REVENUE COLLECTED at OKARITO (exclusive of Gold Duty) for the Half-year ending 31st December, 1869. Also showing that for the Half-year ending 30th June, 1869, and for the two Half-years of 1868.

Period.	Customs Revenue, exclusive of Gold.	Remarks.
1869.	£ s. d.	This half-year shows an increase of £207 19s. 7d. over that ending 30th June.
Half-year ending 31st December	1,228 7 7	
" " 30th June ...	1,020 8 0	
Total for year 1869 ...	2,248 15 7	
1868.		The Revenue for 1869 shows an increase over that for the year 1868 of £462 5s.
Half-year ending 31st December	898 5 10	
" " 30th June ...	888 4 9	
Total for year 1868 ...	1,786 10 7	

RETURN D.

RETURN of GOLD FIELDS REVENUE in the OKARITO DISTRICT for the Half-year ending 31st December, 1869; also showing that for the Half-year ending 30th June, 1869, and for the two Half-years of 1868.

Period.	All Gold Fields Revenue, M.R.s, B.L.s, P.L.s, Surveys.	Remarks.
1869.	£ s. d.	This half-year shows an increase of £371 10s. over that ending 30th June.
Half-year ending 31st December	719 12 6	
Half-year ending 30th June	348 2 6	
Total for year 1869	1,067 15 0	
1868.	£ s. d.	N.B. The revenue for 1869 shows an increase over that of 1868 of £318 9s.
Half-year ending 31st December	299 9 0	
Half-year ending 30th June	449 17 0	
Total for year 1868	749 6 0	

RETURN E.

PRICE of PROVISIONS in the OKARITO DISTRICT on 31st December, 1869, at the several localities as under.

Articles.	Okarita, 5 miles.	Gillespie's Beach, 24 miles from Okarito.	Hunt's Beach, 34 miles from Okarito.	Bruce Bay, 42 miles from Okarito.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Flour per 100 lbs. ...	1 8 0	2 5 0	1 15 0	1 10 0
Tea per lb. ...	0 3 6	0 3 9	0 3 6	0 3 6
Sugar per lb. ...	0 0 8	0 0 10	0 0 9	0 0 8
Coffee per lb. ...	0 2 0	0 2 6	0 2 0	0 2 0
Butter per lb. ...	0 2 0	0 2 6	0 2 2	0 2 0
Bacon per lb. ...	0 1 8	0 2 4	0 1 8	0 1 6
Ham per lb. ...	0 1 10	0 2 4	0 2 0	0 1 10
Candles per lb. ...	0 2 0	0 2 6	0 2 2	0 2 2
Cheese per lb. ...	0 1 8	Nil.	0 1 6	0 1 9
Potatoes per cwt. ...	1 0 0	1 10 0	1 5 0	0 18 0
Tobacco per lb. ...	0 8 0	0 8 0	0 9 0	0 7 0
Soap per lb. ...	0 0 8	0 1 0	0 0 10	0 0 10
Rice per lb. ...	0 0 8	0 0 10	0 0 9	0 0 10
Oatmeal per lb. ...	0 0 8	0 0 10	0 0 9	0 0 10
4 lb. loaf ...	0 1 6	Nil.	0 2 0	Nil.
Fresh meat per lb. ... {	0 1 3	1 3 0	0 1 1	0 1 1
	0 1 0	1 0 0	0 1 3	0 1 3

M. PRICE, Warden.

Enclosure 6 in No. 2.

KANIERI DISTRICT.

SIR,— Warden's Office, Kanieri, 8th January, 1870.

I have the honor to forward the following report on this district for the past six months:—

The number of cases tried in the Warden's Court here, during the period was, in July, nine; 2nd September, five; 1st August, eleven; October, thirteen; November, four; December, ten. Total, fifty-two.

During the last three months several parties have been prospecting different parts of this district, especially up the Hokitika and Kokatahi Rivers. Up to the present time no certain information has been obtained of a payable gold field having been found, but specimens have been shown by one party, which indicate the existence of gold; and I am informed that the party who found these specimens purpose to continue their search, and if possible to bottom the ground.

Unfounded rumours of the discovery of new gold fields have caused a few rushes which have been productive of much injury, causing many men to forsake claims that were yielding fair wages, and which on their return they found occupied. This unsatisfactory result was particularly noticeable in the case of a prospecting claim, granted to Bouchier and party, on the statement of the applicant that his party had found a payable gold field, which statement the man must have known was utterly false.

The lead which has been struck on the Brighton Terrace has, after many disappointments, been proved to extend for a considerable distance; and although but few claims are as yet in full working order, a great many parties are driving tunnels, and most are sanguine of the results. I still think it premature to assert that this lead will be found a continuous one, though there is every prospect of many rich claims being found. I have recommended for your sanction the grant of a special claim to Rea and party, who have applied for ten acres on Tucker Flat. They propose to work the ground on the same principle as that which is now being so successfully carried on by the "Victoria" and "Western" Mining Companies in Kanieri, and I trust that before long many enterprises of a like nature may be organized, as I believe that they are the best means of working such ground, which contains gold much diffused amongst it in but small quantities, and of which kind of ground a very large area is known to exist in the district, and which cannot profitably be worked by the ordinary system. Should this kind of enterprise extend, I am convinced that both the population and the yield of gold in this district will be considerably increased and rendered much more permanent. The failure of the Kanieri Lake Water Race Company has been a loss to the district, but I have reason to believe that the scheme might yet be carried out; it will doubtless be of great benefit, and promises to be profitable to the proprietors.

A matter of great importance to the district is the success which has been attained by the few who have entered on agricultural pursuits. I am informed that the crops of potatoes and oats which are growing in the few farms between Kanieri and Longford are most promising, and the owners are steadily extending their cultivations. I regret that I cannot furnish exact statistics of these farms, as they would be the best proof of the excellent prospects which farming in this district presents. Already the inhabitants in the neighbourhood are deriving the benefit of having farms so near, as they are supplied with abundance of milk at the low price of sixpence per quart, and potatoes of a very superior quality are already in the market, which, notwithstanding the high cost of carriage, arising from the absence of roads, will be able to compete with importations from other places.

Two small rushes took place in October, near the Big Paddock, neither of which have proved of much importance, though some few good claims are being worked, especially in the Omeo Lead.

The population at the Blue Spur remains pretty much the same, and steady profitable work is going on there, with every prospect of continuing for some time. A few parties are still employed up the Arahura, and some prospecting has been going on in that direction, but with what success I have not heard.

On the whole I am justified in stating that this district is steadily improving; and should the efforts of the various parties out prospecting meet with success, there are reasonable grounds for believing that an increased prosperity will be attained during the current six months.

I have, &c.,
J. AYLMER, Warden.

The Chairman of the County Council, Hokitika.

Enclosure 7 in No. 2.
REPORT BY COUNTY ENGINEER.

Sir,—
Hokitika, 31st December, 1869.

I have the honor to report that during the last six months I have been engaged upon the different works, surveys, and explorations as below described:—

Completion of survey and drawings of the Mikonui Water Race.
Completion of survey and drawings of the Kanieri Water Race.
Superintendence of construction of Hohonu Water Race.
Exploration and survey of line of road Hokitika to Ross.
Detail survey of Race line from Sandstone Creek to Beach.
Reconnaissance survey and map of the Taipo and Lake Brunner Districts, with estimate of feasible track, &c.
Direction of works in progress from Hokitika to Arahura.
Various matters of routine in connection with the above, and other items more minutely described in statement of expenditure.

Detailed descriptions of some of the above are hereto attached, together with map of the districts explored, and surveys of the roads as laid out; also a statement of cost of each item.

Malcolm Fraser, Esq., Chief Surveyor, Hokitika. C. W. O'CONNOR, C.E.

MIKONUUI WATER RACE.

The following results of the detail survey of this Race are given as a guide to the formation of rough estimates of quantities, and in similar cases:—

—	Length of Contour Line following round Spurs.	Length of proposed Race as curtailed by Tunnels.	Distance as the crow flies.
Head of race to end of contour line near German Gully	25 miles 64 chains.	18 miles 40 chains.	9 miles 40 chains.

Of the 18 miles 40 chains as above:—

1 mile 8 chains = Fluming, average 18½ feet in height with boxes	...	For 40 Sluice Heads.
8 " 35 " = Boxing laid in side cutting	...	4' 8" x 2' 6"
2 " 68 " = Tunnelling	...	4' 8" x 2' 6"
2 " 9 " = Ditching	...	5' 0" x 3' 0"
		At low side.
		4' 8" x 3' 3"

The total cost of the detail survey, including preparation of plans, sections, estimates, &c., was £994 2s. 3d. = £38 10s. 8d. per mile of contour line, or £53 14s. 8d. per mile of line, as finally adopted.

KANIERI WATER RACE.

Result of the detail survey given for the same purpose as above:—

—	Length of Contour Line as run round Spurs.	Length of proposed Race as curtailed by Tunnels.	Distance as the crow flies.
Kanieri Lake to Big Paddock	17 miles 0 chains	13 miles 3 chains	7 miles 70 chains.
Big Paddock to Blue Spur	4 miles 0 chains	1 mile 71 chains	1 mile 20 chains.
Total	21 miles 0 chains	14 miles 74 chains	9 miles 10 chains.

Of the 14 miles 74 chains as above:—

1 mile 32 chains = Fluming, average height 17 feet with boxes	...	For 40 Sluice Heads.
2 " 67 " = Boxing laid inside cutting	...	4' 2" x 2' 6"
1 " 40 " = Tunnelling	...	4' 2" x 2' 6"
9 " 15 " = Ditching	...	5' 0" x 3' 0"
		At low side.
		4' 2" x 3' 3"

The cost of the detailed survey, including preparation of plans, sections, tables of quantities, &c., was £607 18s. 7d. The estimated value of the original trial line in facilitating survey was £250, in all £807 18s. 7d = £40 17s. 1d. per mile of contour line, or £57 9s. 7d. per mile of line as finally adopted.

HOHONU WATER RACE.

	Length of Contour Line as received.	Length of Line finally adopted.	Distance as the crow flies.
Head of Race to Duke's Terrace ...	5 miles 42 chains.	5 miles 23 chains.	3 miles 78 chains.

Of the 5 miles 23 chains as above:—			To deliver 47 Sluice Heads.
0 mile 49 chains = Fluming, average 10½ feet in height, boxes	...	...	4' 6" x 2' 6"
1 „ 12 „ = Boxing laid in side cutting	...	...	4' 6" x 2' 6"
3 „ 42 „ = Ditching, size of cut	...	...	4' 9" x 3' 4"
The total cost of the detailed survey, including plans, sections, estimates, tables of quantities, specifications, &c., = £247 12s. 4d.—that is £44 16s. 6d. per mile of line as finally adopted.			
The average price of Fluming throughout was			£ s. d. 39 18 0 per chain
„ „ Boxing	„	„	20 0 4 „
„ „ Ditching	„	„	4 14 10 „

BROOKER AND COMPANY'S WATER RACE.

This race is undertaken by the above party of miners for the purpose of washing the black sand on the beach between tracks H.D. and H.E., about four miles south of the Hokitika River. It is being constructed to carry two Government heads of water, derived from a stream called Sandstone Creek, which runs into the Mahinapua River on the east side. The total length of race will be two miles fifteen chains, of which fifty chains consists of fluming averaging eighty feet in height. The line has been levelled by Mr. Murray, and a section with sizes of cut, boxing, &c., given to the promoters.

ROAD FROM ARTHUR'S TOWN AND HOKITIKA TO ROSS.

Commencing on south side of Hokitika River at the point selected for punt landing, the line for this road is laid out to meeting with Woolhouse's track, near Ross. As will be seen from the plan herewith,* the proposed line lies on west side of, and adjacent to 5ft. track H.F., from Hokitika River to the H.O. track. From the junction of H.O. and H.F. it runs to a point on the H.B. line about 40 chains beyond the crossing of same, with H.P. Thence to the Totara it follows nearly the course of the H.B. track. On the terrace overhanging the Hokitika River, the road will reach an elevation of about 350 feet above the sea level; but throughout the remainder of its course the average height above the sea is about 250 feet, and the formation of the country is easy, with light timber. The steepest gradient necessary will be about one in ten. The average distance of the road from the sea will be—
From Woodstock to Mahinapua Lake ... 3 miles
From Mahinapua Lake to Ross ... 2 „
From Hokitika the connecting road will run from commencement of Hospital Road, on south side of river, to a point on the line above described, about 60 chains north of its crossing with H.A. track. The cost of a road, formed, gravelled, and drained, 10 feet wide, and cleared 33 feet wide, I estimate as follows:—
From Woodstock to the Totara Road, W. Harvey's Creek ... 14¼ miles, £6,020
Connection from Hokitika to main road as above ... 2¼ „ £1,100
Total ... 16½ miles, £7,120
If made from Hokitika alone, without connection with Woodstock, 14¼ miles, £6,470

EXPLANATION OF THE COUNTRY IN THE VICINITY OF TAIPO RIVER AND LAKE BRUNNER, WITH THE VIEW OF ASCERTAINING THE LOCALITY AND CONDITION OF THE DIFFERENT GOLD WORKINGS, AND THE MOST FEASIBLE ROUTES THERETO.
WITH respect to the Taipo District, no further data relating to the workings have been obtainable since my report of 24th November last. The reconnaissance survey, however, has been extended, and a map, executed under your direction, has been issued to the public. The country and gold-workings to the north of Teremakau are shown upon the map sent herewith; and the following notes relating to them may possibly be useful.
Bell Hill workings are situated at foot of a low ridge about six miles N.E. of the N.E. corner of Lake Brunner; some rich deposits have been found in the district, and the country for a considerable distance round Bell and Jones' Hills has been proved auriferous.
Jones' Creek, shown on map, at its crossing with horse-track near Bell Hill, was the site of the Lake Brunner rush of 1865. The expectations formed of the place at that time have been proved fallacious, and the country, which was expected to be capable of supporting seven or eight hundred men, has only maintained about fifty or sixty; but this number have made a good living, notwithstanding the great difficulties they have experienced in obtaining food.
Immediately adjoining Bell Hill, the workings are of such a nature that their continuance for a considerable time is almost a matter of certainty. The gold is deposited in a rock basin which forms

* The plan illustrating this portion of the Report does not appear to have been forwarded.

the foundation of the hill itself; and as the accumulation of water in this basin prevents the bottom being worked in the ordinary manner by shafts, the lips or sides of the basin require to be pierced before reaching the gold-bearing deposit, and the tunnels rendered thus necessary will in some of the claims reach a length of 300 feet through solid rock. The distance which the gutter or basin above described extends round the hill is uncertain, but there is every reason to believe it considerable; and if the claims now driving succeed in obtaining as good ground as the one which is already through the rock, other tunnels of greater magnitude will no doubt be attempted.

The means of communication with this district from the Nelson side are exceedingly bad, and there is little probability that they will be much improved for a considerable time.

Up to the present time Hokitika has been the source of supply for this district. The goods have been brought up the Christchurch Road through the Paddock and across Lake Brunner; from thence there are two practicable routes—the one up the Crooked River to Lady Lake, and thence along Roche's horse-track to Bell Hill; and the other, which is considered preferable, up horse-track direct from Lake Brunner to Bell Hill. Both routes are bad. The navigation of the river is exceedingly tortuous and difficult, and occupies from two to three days to accomplish. The track direct is such that a return journey is a hard day's work for pack-horses.

It will be seen from the foregoing description and the map attached, that under existing circumstances goods have to be packed from the Christchurch Road to Lake Brunner, a distance of seven miles, thence brought by boat across the lake, six and a half miles, and again packed up track seven and a half miles—a mode of procedure which involves two wayside transshipments, and occupies at least two days. Against this the proposed track would be a total distance of nineteen miles, and could be travelled by pack-horses carrying much heavier loads in one day. It would follow foot of hills for nearly the entire distance, and could be formed easily. The surface in most cases is composed of gravel-wash from the hillsides, and the timber growing upon it is light and scattered.

There are three advantages in making the track in the position indicated above:—1st. That being the most direct communication to an open market, it will secure the trade of the district to Westland. 2nd. That being situated in pastoral or possibly agricultural land, it may lead to settlement in the district. 3rd. That it will open up and offer facilities for the prospecting of a large range of hills lying north of the Teremakau.

The cost of a track metalled three feet wide and cleared ten feet wide to boundary of County, I estimate at £420; the remainder of the distance to Bell Hill (five miles), which would probably be completed by local enterprise, would cost about £150, if made after the same model.

ROAD FROM HOKITIKA TO ARAHURA.

The works of this road were commenced by the hard-labour gang at the Town Belt, on the 10th November last, and have since that date progressed steadily. Of the total distance (viz. 280 chains from Town Belt to Arahura), twenty-five chains have been completed, with the necessary culverts, &c.

With a view to ascertaining the value of each labourer to the County when employ on works of this description, I have made an estimate of the earthwork, &c., completed to date, taking current contract rates as below:—

	£	s.	d.
25 chains felling, 1 chain wide, at £	50	0	0
474 cubic yards excavations in roots, at 3s.	71	0	0
1,498 cubic yards excavations in gravel, at 1s.	74	0	0
6 lineal yards excavations of 22 feet culvert, at £5	30	0	0
Total value	£226	0	0

There have been engaged upon the work valued as above an inspector, two warders, and an average of eleven men per day. The road was previously laid out and its progress supervised by an Engineer paid by the Government. The money-value of the work done may therefore be subdivided as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Proportionate cost of survey	9	7	6
Engineering supervision	3	12	4
Salary of Inspector	16	19	6
Salary of two Warders	29	2	0
Number of men employed equivalent to 390 men for one day of eight hours against balance 8s. 7d. per day per man	116	18	8
	£226	0	0

Dividing the sum total by the number of days' work would give a value of 11s. 7d. per day for each man directed, guarded, &c., but in most cases the proportionate value given above would be found more convenient to deal with.

Within seventy chains of the point to which this road is now completed a cutting commences, the stuff from which will be required to form an embankment on north side of the Hauhau Creek.

Judging from the progress hitherto made, I believe that the road will be completed to the commencement of cutting, as above, by the end of May next; and in order that the works may proceed without delay, it would be advisable that the bridge over the Hauhau Creek should be finished by that time. I should therefore suggest that a contract be let for the completion of the bridge, as the number of men in hard-labour gang is very limited, and the amount of skilled labour required would be almost beyond their powers.

CHARLES Y. O'CONNOR.

NOTE.—A map, in which will appear the entire water-race scheme of the country is in course of preparation by the Engineer, and will be forwarded as soon as completed.

Enclosure 8 in No. 2.

GREY DISTRICT.

SIR,— Warden's Office, Greymouth, 31st December, 1869.
I have the honor to transmit for your information the following report on that portion of the Grey District under my charge.

On the South Beach the lead of gold has been traced from the Stony Head northward to the South Town Belt, and south to the Saltwater Creek, and thence along the old lagoon head towards the New River. The greater portion of this ground is taken up and held as extended claims, varying from half an acre to three acres. The lead is from fifteen to twenty-three feet deep, and large tunnel tail races have to be constructed to drain and work the ground. In some instances two or three adjoining claims have amalgamated to construct one tunnel to their claims, which expedites the work, and is a saving of labour to all concerned. Several of these tunnels, which are from 500 to 1,000 feet in length, have been completed, and the owners are in full work in their claims, with very fair prospects.

The heavy rain in October did considerable damage to these tunnels, especially that of the All Nations, and the branch tunnels of the Homeward Bound and ; but the shareholders set to work, and after six weeks' labour, have repaired damages, and cut a race to take off the storm water.

In the Arnold District mining operations have been steady, and gold has been struck in the neighbourhood of the Stillwater Creek, which has caused a slight increase in the population there.

Pigon and party are pushing on with their tunnel, 3,000 feet in length. They are within 500 feet of their claim, which is a special claim of five acres, granted under clause 12 of "The Gold Fields Act, 1866."

A monthly Court is held at Maori Gully, and the constable in charge issues notices of application for registration; and when the time for posting has duly expired, he forwards them by post to Greymouth, where the registration certificates are prepared and returned by next post, which is a great saving of expense and loss of time to the miners in outlying gullies.

The road from the Coal Mine to Maori Gully has been completed, except the bridge over the Stillwater Creek, which is now in course of construction. By the completion of this road freight on goods has been reduced from £14 to £9 per ton; the goods being landed at the Stillwater, and carted from thence to Maori Gully.

About Rutherglen and Welshman's Terrace there are some parties working the shallow ground; but the difficulty of obtaining water is a serious drawback to the better working of this ground.

The company formed to work the lease of ten acres on the South Beach have been unfortunate, and are about to be wound up.

In October a movement was made to re-form the company to work the coal mines and construct the railway thereto, but up to the present date no definite arrangements have been made; but negotiations are now pending for the formation of this company, which I believe will be successful.

Hamilton and Co.'s tramway is now open for traffic from Paroa to Marsden, and in conjunction with Kilgour's tramway from Greymouth. The carriage of goods has been very considerably reduced.

I estimate the population roughly at 3,300, as follows:—Greymouth, 2,000; South Beach, 600; Saltwater Creek, Rutherglen, 150; Arnold, 550—total, 3,300.

The revenue from all sources for the six months amounts to £1,947 4s., and during the same period forty-two cases were disposed of in the Wardens' Courts at Greymouth and Arnold, and 641 certificates of registration were issued, viz.:—39 extended claims; 82 head races; 72 dams; 54 tail races; 394 transfers, renewals, &c.

During the past four months the weather has been remarkably dry, and there has been a total absence of freshes in the large rivers, which have been usual at this season of the year. The great scarcity of water all over the district has greatly retarded the operations of the miners, who have, in many instances, been obliged to stack their wash-dirt for two and three months.

Herewith is attached a list of the retail prices at Greymouth, Arnold, Rutherglen, and Marsden, and also a return of gold exported from Greymouth for the six months, ending 31st December, 1869.

I have, &c.,
W. H. REVELL, Warden.

The Chairman, County Council, Westland.

LIST OF RETAIL PRICES IN THE GREY DISTRICT.

Article.	Greymouth.	Arnold.	Rutherglen.	Marsden.
Flour per ton ...	£20 to £22	£34	£24	£26
Tea per lb. ...	3s. to 4s.	3s. 6d.	3s. 6d.	3s. 6d.
Sugar „ ...	6d. to 7d.	8d.	6d. to 7d.	8d.
Butter „ ...	1s. 6d. to 2s.	2s.	1s. 9d.	2s.
Bacon „ ...	1s. 2d.	1s. 6d.	1s. 6d.	1s. 8d.
Cheese „ ...	1s.	1s. 6d.	1s. 6d.	1s. 8d.
Candles „ ...	1s. 4d. to 1s. 6d.	1s. 6d.	1s. 6d.	1s. 9d.
Beef „ ...	9d. to 1s.	8d. to 10d.	...	...
Potatoes per cwt. ...	6s.	17s.	8s. to 10s.	10s.
Freight ...	...	£9	£3	£4

RETURN of GOLD exported from GREYMOUTH during the Six Months ending 31st December, 1869.

Gold produce of Westland	...	...	...	16,527 Oz.
Gold produce of Nelson	...	...	...	20,616 „

Enclosure 9 in No. 2.

TOTARA DISTRICT.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Ross, 31st December, 1869.

The Totara District, for the six months ending 31st December, 1870, has not been in a very flourishing state, owing to the Drainage Company not having quite completed their engine. I trust I will be able to report more favourably of the district on the next occasion. Since my last, quartz reefs have been discovered at Redman's, and up the Totara River; many leases have been applied for, and the reefs are being vigorously prospected, but as yet little is known of them.

The following will give an idea of the state of the district, with regard to mining matters; also the prices of provisions and rate of wages ruling here at present, &c. :—

Mining Surveys.—111 a. 3 r. 33 p., cost £211; 17 extended claims; 9 mining leases; 5 mining surveys.

Steam Power.—Ross United Steam Drainage Company, two engines, one 60 one 30 horse-power, nominal; Scandinavian, 14-horse power; Morning Star, 16-horse power; Band of Hope, 16-horse power; Ross Extended, 12-horse power—a new engine is about to be erected on this claim; the Croesus, 45-horse power; Golden Gate, 10-horse power.

Horse-Whims.—Forty horse-whims.

Water-Wheels.—Eight water-wheels.

Saw-Mills.—Two saw-mills.

Head and Tail Races applied for during last six months.—Head races, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles; tail races, 3 miles.

Gold.—14,935 oz., at 75s. 6d. per oz., £56,379 12s. 6d.; population, 2,000—thus showing £28 3s. 9½d. worth of gold per head for the six months, or £1 per week for every man, woman, and child.

Provisions.—Flour, 21s. per 100 lb.; sugar, 7d. to 8d. per lb.; tea, 3s. to 3s. 6d. per lb.; potatoes (new), 15s. per cwt.; bacon, 1s. to 1s. 3d. per lb.; cheese, 1s. to 1s. 3d. per lb.; butter, 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. per lb.; coffee, 1s. 6d. to 1s. 9d. per lb.

Horse Feed.—Oats, 7s. per bushel; chaff, 22s. per cwt.

Cartage from Hokitika.—70s. to 80s. per 2,000 lb.

Timber.—Sawn, red pine, 11s. per 100 ft., delivered; sawn, white pine, 10s. per 100 ft., delivered.

Laths.—Red pine, 37s. 6d. per 100 ft., delivered; white pine, 35s. per 100 ft., delivered.

Props.—Red pine and birch, 6 ft., 80s. per 100; white pine and birch, 75s. per 100.

Caps.—Nine feet long, 7 to 9 in. diameter, £7 10s. per 100.

Wages (per ten hours).—Engineers, 16s. 8d.; fitters, 15s.; blacksmiths, 15s.; carpenters, 15s.; engine-drivers, 13s. 4d.; pitmen, 13s. 4d.; labourers, 11s. 8d.; clerks, from £2 to £3 per week; general servants, £40 to £50 per year; barmaids, 30s. to 40s. per week.

I feel quite sure of the future prosperity of the district as soon as Jones' Flat is drained, a fact which will be accomplished early in the year (1870).

The township of Ross is on the increase, which is a great sign of the confidence the people have in the future welfare of the place.

The Chairman, County Council, Westland.

I have, &c.,

J. AYLMER, Warden.

Enclosure 10 in No. 2.

TAIPO QUARTZ REEFS.

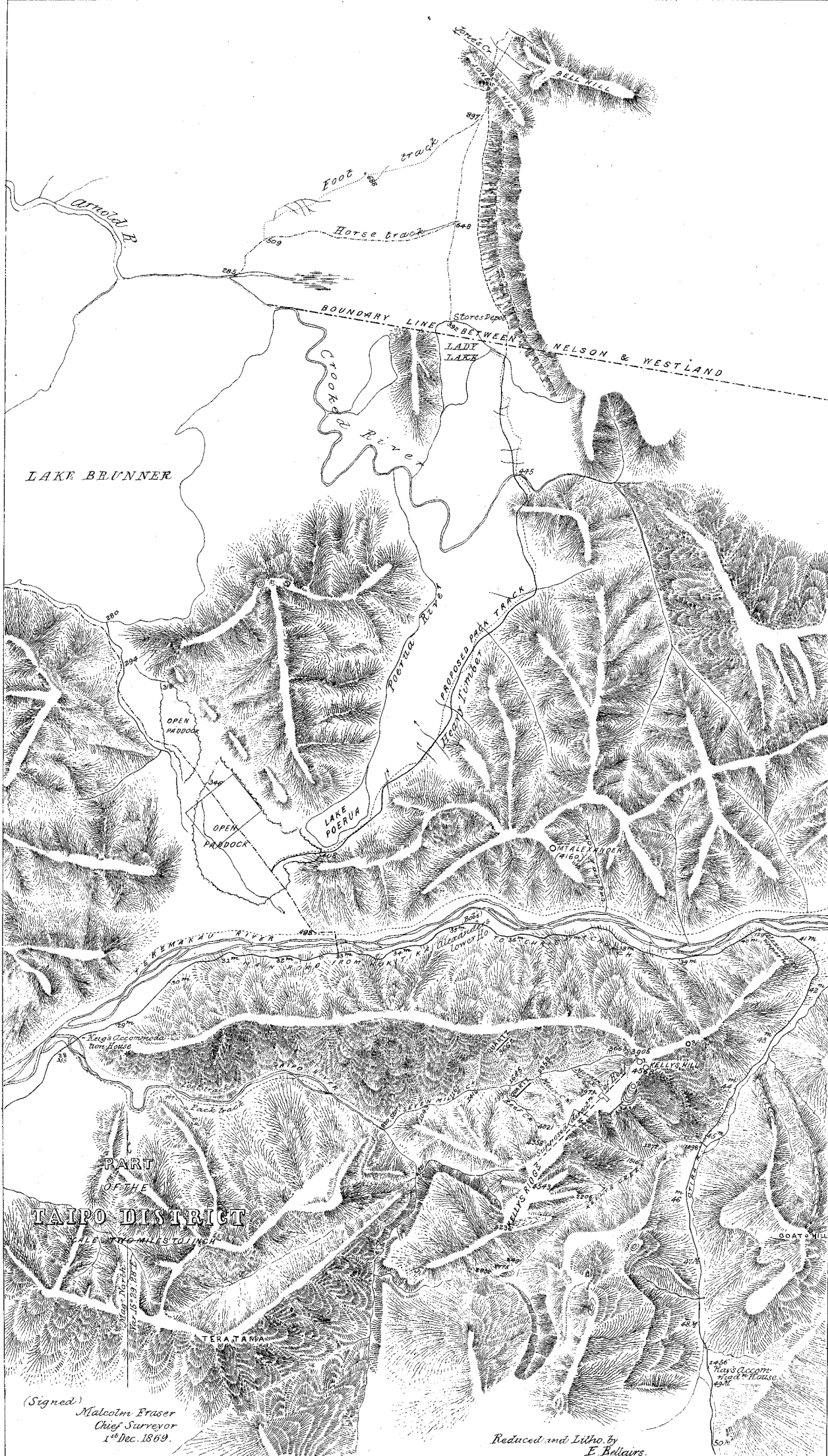
SIR,—

Survey Office, Hokitika, N.Z., 25th November, 1869.

In reference to the gold-bearing leaders recently struck on Mount Kelly, in the Taipo District, I have the honor to forward, together with this, a copy of Mr. O'Connor's report to this office, and a tracing of so much of his survey as is complete at present: both of these convey valuable information bearing on the subject. I have visited the district myself since last week, but, in reporting generally, shall forbear touching on all such matters of detail as have been dwelt on by Mr. O'Connor, as I am quite satisfied with the correctness of his statements.

The principal barrier to a speedy determination of the value of the ground is its inaccessibility, owing to its great altitude of 4,500 feet, this being more than 1,000 feet above what may be termed the winter snow line: from this cause it will be found impracticable to work the upper ground successfully during at least six months of the year, without incurring a considerable outlay, which is enhanced by there being no timber at such altitude—and the construction of tunnels at lower levels, and of some hundred yards in length, is no light expense. As an experienced quartz-miner said to me, "All this would be nothing if, when done, the reef was sure to be found, but the probability is that years may be spent in looking for it, for at such depth it may not exist, or it may be found at a considerable distance from the place imagined." The specimens which have been taken from the ground are satisfactory, but the question arises whether individual labour can successfully combat the difficulties already alluded to. I am disposed to think it cannot. If so, to induce capital, considerable areas, with a good tenure, should be granted to those who will engage to furnish the ways and means to fully, and probably successfully, develop these reefs, of which nothing is known at present; and no delay should be allowed, as the few summer months are essential at the outset to get the work in order.

As nothing is known at present of the direction of the main reef, if there is one, it would be desirable, in granting a given area, not to restrict the boundaries of it on all sides, but so to dispose certain bounds of different areas, that the possessors, so to say, may work unfettered by one another, until the lay and inclination of the several leaders, or of the reef, are somewhat determined. This system, or something similar to it, has already been advanced, I believe, by others, and I am inclined to believe that such arrangements would materially assist in getting capital placed. I subjoin a portion of a



(Signed)
Malcolm Fraser
Chief Surveyor
1st Dec. 1869.

Reduced and Litho. by
E. Ballairs.

DONATION CARD

Author's name in full, surname first

Title

Edition

Place of publication

Publisher

Classification

Date of publication

Pages

Volumes

Series

List price

Subject

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Received

private letter written to me by Mr. Edwin Beake, C.E. (this I have his permission to do): it is valuable, on account of the information contained relating to lines of communication from different points of the district. He says:—

“The tracks at present are up the Taipo, by Alexander’s, and up Kelly’s Creek.

“The Taipo track has the disadvantage of being the longest distance from the Christchurch road and the river crossings, with the addition of requiring the largest outlay to construct. Alexander’s has the disadvantage of traversing the high level for about two miles, which will be locked up by snow five months in twelve; otherwise it would probably be the easiest made. The one by Kelly’s Creek will be the least distance from the road, and will not be snowed up for any length of time, as the altitude will not be within 700 feet as high as Alexander’s.

“The track would start somewhere about the upper end of the Otira cuttings, and sidle up with a regular gradient by Kelly’s Creek, on to the saddle, dividing it from the Seven-mile Creek.

I think the cost of making a track up the Taipo would be £1,500, as a foot-track would be required as well as a pack-track on account of the river crossings. Alexander’s would cost from £500 to £600; Kelly’s Creek, from £600 to £700; and one great advantage it has over Alexander’s is, that people will not be lost in the thick fogs which are prevalent on these hills. I may also state, in favour of the track up the Taipo, that, if made, no stoppage would accrue from snow.

“If you wish to make a track so as to answer as much as possible for the whole district, I think you will see that it makes little difference which track is made for such purpose, as when once up on the high level the ridges all connect from Rocky Point, Alexander’s, Kelly’s Creek, and back up the east side of the Taipo to main range, towards the head of the Manuakariri.”

I am not aware that there is any principal point that is not touched in either Mr. O’Connor’s report or this.

The Chairman, County Council, Westland.

I have, &c.,

M. FRAZER, Chief Surveyor.

SIR,—

Hokitika, 24th November, 1869.

I have the honor to report that, in accordance with your instructions of the 16th instant, I have explored and made a reconnaissance survey of the country in the vicinity of the prospecting claim on the Taipo quartz reefs. The claim is situated on a ridge known as Kelly’s Hill, and the surface above reef is at an elevation of 4,450 feet above the sea level. Referring the Prospectors’ Claim to the three points on the Christchurch Road from where it is accessible, its position may be briefly stated as follows:—

Average inclination for seven miles, 60 feet per mile; average inclination for two and a half miles, 450 feet per mile; average inclination for one and a half miles, 2,000 feet per mile. For seven miles the track is practicable for pack-horses, the remainder of the distance is a foot-track. From Alexander’s accommodation house the total distance is about five miles: the track reaches top of hill, by following sidling and spur, at an average incline of 1,000 feet per mile for three miles, and thence along ridge, over a rocky and uneven surface for the remaining two miles. This line is at present a foot-track, not practicable for pack-horses; but, within the last week, sheep have been driven along it to top of hill.

From Kelly’s Creek Bridge, the total distance is about two and a half miles. Average inclination one and a half miles, 2,000 feet per mile; average inclination remaining distance, 500 feet per mile. So much for the position and accessibility of the claim under existing circumstances.

During the time I remained upon the ground, scarcely any excavation was attempted with the view of defining the reef supposed to exist; the only party sinking being the prospectors, who commenced a shaft on upper side of gold-bearing leader originally struck: the direction of the leader is about N.W. and S.E., dipping towards the South about six feet in four, and it continues to show gold in about the same quantities as the first specimens. The general stratification of the rocks bears nearly at right angles to this leader, running N.E. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. and S.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ S., and from this fact, and the existence of blows of quartz in the same direction along the hill, it is supposed that a reef exists in the position traced on accompanying map; that such is probable seems to be borne out by the fact of two parallel reefs (the position and direction of which I have shown on map) existing in the vicinity.

The position of this reef, situated as it is on the summit of a ridge of great altitude, would render the testing of it, by an ordinary shaft, a matter of hardship and difficulty to the men engaged; so that although a shaft would be the most certain and satisfactory method of proving and following the quartz, the means most likely to be adopted in this case are tunnels driven from the face of the hill 300 or 400 feet under the summit. The fact of the ridge falling abruptly at one side into Kelly’s Creek, and at the other side into the tributaries of the Taipo, affords a favourable opportunity for driving these tunnels; the only circumstance tending to fix the side at which tunnels would commence being the dip of rock face, which is westerly, and probably carries the reef with it. The cost of one such tunnel from face of hill, say 400 feet under the surface, and driven to line supposed to be followed by reef, would be about £1,200 to £1,500.

With regard to the possibility of working the reef in a systematic manner hereafter, I may state that along Kelly’s Creek a drayroad could be constructed to the prospectors’ claim, if necessary, without any gradient worse than 1 in 6, while along the Taipo and its branches a drayroad could be carried for nine and a half miles, leaving one and a quarter miles to be worked by a tramway, which it would be possible to construct.

The possibility of either or both of the quartz reefs before referred to proving auriferous along some part of their course, would render it most expedient to provide for the supply of the reefs at present known to be auriferous as much as possible through the main artery of the country, the Taipo River itself.

Reef gold has been found in most of the creeks leading into the Taipo River, and the great majority of the country seems to be auriferous; so, although it must be conceded that a road up Kelly’s Creek would provide more efficiently for the particular point at present requiring development, yet such road

would commence at too great a distance from the source of supply and cross point of too great elevation to admit of being extended into a main route for the whole district.

I am at present engaged in preparing a map of the district showing the quartz reefs known to exist, and the probable course which they follow. With such a map as a guide, much time and labour would be saved in tracing the reefs over so rough a line of country as the Taipo is.

The Chief Surveyor, Hokitika.

I have, &c.,

C. Y. O'CONNOR,
Mining Engineer.

Enclosure 11 in No. 2.

GREENSTONE DISTRICT.

SIR,—

Poenamu, 31st December, 1869.

Since my half-yearly report of 30th June last, fresh ground has, as I anticipated, been opened between the Eight-mile and the Greenstone—No Name being the centre of these new workings. Hitherto men have been engaged here mostly in preliminary operations, the major part working by tunnel. There is likely to be a considerable increase of population here after the Christmas holidays.

Eight-mile.—To this have flocked a large proportion of those who had been located about the Eight-mile, and consequently this latter at the present time looks dull; yet there is ground about here that will probably employ for a long time to come more than its present population, but, being for the most part heavier ground than usual, it requires men of some capital who can undertake it. For this reason I have here granted several claims of double areas.

Greenstone.—No material change has taken place in the Greenstone (proper) sub-district. Mining has proceeded steadily during the past six months.

It suffered severely from the reaction sure to follow a greatly over-estimated rush, such as was this at the beginning of the year. But there are evidences of improvement lately; and I should hope that the Hohonu Water Race, completed to the Duke of Edinburgh Terrace, will materially exist in the development of mining operations in this neighbourhood.

There have been already several extended claims applied for and granted by me here (besides a lease of ten acres by the County Chairman to the above-named Race Company), the intention being to work these claims in connection with this race.

Hohonu Water Race.—I cannot pass the subject without expressing my opinion of this enterprise. The mode in which the work has been done, from first to last, is deserving of the highest praise. The best professional assistance (Mr. O'Connor's) was sought, his advice was followed, and the result has been the execution of the finest piece of work of its kind (of its length) certainly on the West Coast, if not in New Zealand; and I sincerely hope the result to its spirited owners may be such as to induce similar enterprise elsewhere.

Population.—I estimate the population as follows:—Greenstone, 700; Eight Mile, 350; No Name, 700; various small groups not specified, 250; total, 2000.

I feel confident that this district is more likely to increase than to diminish in importance if its just requirements be attended to, so as to promote the proper development of its resources; of these the chief are, as I have so frequently taken occasion to mention, tracks passable for pack-horses. Towards this the Road Board has done something—as much, I believe, as the means at their disposal allowed. Messrs. Hamilton and Co.'s tramway, though terminating exactly at the boundary of the district, is of material advantage to it, and the County Road gives communication with Stafford. But what is specially required is the means of intercommunication by such tracks as the Road Board have constructed between Cock-a-Bulla and Clifton, within the district.

Poenamu, Clifton, No Name, have means of intercourse with Hokitika or Greymouth, but are to all intents and purposes isolated from each other. It is easier far to get from Poenamu to Hokitika, twenty-five miles, than to Clifton, twelve miles, or No Name, six miles. These tracks would not cost any large sum of money, and the advantage to the miners would be inestimable.

Revenue.—Taking the revenue as a test of prosperity and importance, I find the total amount passed through my office last year was £1,682 5s.; for the previous half-year, £2,753 13s. 9d.—total for one year, £4,435 18s. 9d.; and if the moneys paid into Greymouth and Hokitika were calculated, the Greenstone would be found to have added little short of £5,000 to the revenue. Examining these figures, I find again that £280 per month represents the average of the first-named period; I also find the average of the first quarter of the same period to be £256, and of the second quarter of the same period to be £301, whilst the last two months give £366; showing a steadily increasing ratio of revival and improvement. I think, therefore, I am quite borne out in stating that the Greenstone bears favourable comparison with any other district in Westland, and its importance is increasing.

Public House Act.—In my report before alluded to (30th June), I had the honor to call attention to the inadequacy of the Public House Act. Since that it has been amended, but not improved, and I therefore again venture to bring this subject under notice, as I did then (in a special note attached to that report). A well-digested Public House Act, becomes a matter of the utmost importance to any officer administering upon a gold field, and the more simple its provisions the better it works. For a gold field, I regard wholesale and bottle licenses unnecessary, and as affording facilities to evade the law; I should therefore recommend the adoption of only two forms, the ordinary retail (at a much reduced rate) with permissive right of removal to the license; and a bush license under certain restrictions, preventing undue competition with those paying the higher rate—both licenses issuable at yearly and half-yearly rates.

I believe some such plan would, besides much conducing to morality, sensibly increase the revenue, by bringing a license of one sort or another within every man's reach. It is notorious that custom compels nearly every storekeeper to give drink; and it would be far better in every way that license fees should be so reduced as to allow every man to sell drink openly, under police supervision, rather than, by the exorbitant fee demanded, tempt to an infraction of the law.

I have, &c.,

The Chairman, County Council, Westland.

M. KEOGH, Warden.

No. 3.

His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Auckland, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Wellington, 16th June, 1870.

I have the honor to hand you herewith a Report on the Thames Gold Field, pursuant to a resolution of the House, of date 3rd August last, and in reply to your circular of 12th August last.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

THOMAS B. GILLIES.

Enclosure in No. 3.

THAMES GOLD FIELD DISTRICT.

A considerable number of persons were engaged at the commencement of the year 1869 in working claims actually successful, or partially developed only, and in prospecting unworked ground. These were for the most part individuals unskilled in the operations they were conducting, and were possessed of little or no capital to carry them over the preliminary work, before attaining the end they sought for. The search for alluvial diggings had almost if not entirely ceased; and those engaged in mining based their hopes of a successful result to their labours on the yield of gold to be obtained from the quartz reefs when they were reached. These reefs, where yielding, had demonstrated their richness to be almost beyond the wildest hopes of the most imaginative, and were to be won at a small cost of labour and capital in comparison with the quartz reefs of Australia and California. The work, therefore, was for a time steady and energetic under miners' rights, and by simple association of a few individuals. The erection of crushing machinery was being actively pushed forward, and a considerable power, for the circumstances of the field, was already completed and at work. Soon, however, it was found that the small capital available to the miners was exhausted, or that the working of small areas of ground under miners' rights could not be satisfactorily prosecuted, and attempts were made by the miners and those not actively engaged in the operations of the field, yet anxious to share in its benefits, to form the claims into companies. Many of the companies so formed for the purpose of remedying the defects which experience had shown to be incident to the working of claims under miners' rights have been successful, and are still working with satisfactory results. Even then capital was wanting to enable the great number of claims showing fair prospects of successful working to be properly developed, and efforts were made to induce capitalists from the neighbouring Colonies to embark in the undertakings. The tenure of the property on the field, together with the uncertain aspect of Native affairs generally, had great weight with capitalists in causing them to refrain from entering upon work, and investing capital upon undertakings from which the undertakers might at any time, as it would appear to them, be dispossessed at the caprice of the aboriginal owners of the land. To give therefore a better tenure to the property, the leasing regulations were brought into force. The companies already formed availed themselves of these regulations to some extent, but, apart from this, by a judicious expenditure of labour and capital, they were beginning to reap a speedy harvest to their sowing. This result led many to suppose that it was obtained by some virtue inherent in the working by company, or in the leasing system. Consequently there was a rush to form companies, and to apply for leases of land. By the leasing regulations, land applied for under these provisions was protected from the date of application until the lease could be granted. Many claims, and some companies, ceased work therefore; and the individuals composing them sought more profitable employment in the promotion of companies, which were floated, each with a nominal capital bearing an extravagant proportion to the value of the property, to the amount of work done, and to the real available capital of the company. Then was commenced that *furor* in speculation, amounting almost to positive insanity, which, in one form or other, seems to have prevailed on every gold field. The proper work of mining was neglected for the more tempting bait of profits on the sale of scrip, the price of which was only governed by the caprice of the dealer in the article. By the neglect of work, which was fostered, if not engendered, by the delay in the hearing of the applications for, and granting or refusing leases, the yield of gold fell off notwithstanding the produce of such claims as the "Long Drive" and "Golden Crown," and the Thames Gold Field appeared to be yielding a very small percentage on the (fictitious) capital employed. The natural reaction has followed, accompanied by some distress, felt not so much by those at work on the field, as by those who were allured to investing their all, and more than they rightly could afford, in shares, in the hope that by rise in price they would be able to realize a competence. That the field has so speedily recovered from this state of depression, and that the ground is now being worked, and with good results, speaks more in favour of its prospects as a gold field than pages of glowing description. Month by month the yield of gold is steadily increasing, and week by week, ground, for which the application to lease had been abandoned and then thrown open to prospectors, is found to be payably auriferous, showing that confidence in the future of the field is not without a solid basis of facts in evidence.

Roads and Tramways.

From the very broken nature of the gold field, and the dense bush which formed one of its natural features, it was found to be almost futile to attempt to take machinery up to, and erect it so as to be available in immediate contiguity to claims which had already succeeded in winning the reefs. Although the miners used most praiseworthy endeavours to open communications between their claims and the machines, yet, from reasons above stated, such as paucity of capital and want of unity in action, the roads that were opened were of such a character as to entail an exorbitant cost on the transit of the quartz to the machine, in some cases as high as 35s. and 40s. per ton. This cost acted practically as a bar to the crushing of any quartz; and except where, by trial, the quartz had been ascertained to be of great yielding value, or in some cases where large quantities of quartz had been won, it prevented any crushing at all. From these reasons, and urged by the strong representations made to them by those interested in the field, the Provincial Government undertook the construction

of a system of tramways. These were, at very great cost, carried up the various gullies, along the sides of which the claims were being worked, under the able direction and superintendence of Charles O'Neill, Esq., C.E.; and where it was found impracticable to construct the ordinary tramway communication, it has been established and efficiently maintained by a modification of the wire tramway. The reduction in direct cost of transit has by these means been considerable, so much so that the most distant claims on the line of tramways are now able to deliver quartz to machine at 6s. per ton; while the indirect saving in the cost of crushing, by reason of the readily obtained transit, enabling machines to be erected in the neighbourhood of the beach from whence they derive their fuel and other supplies, must be considerable. It was hoped that the revenue derivable from these tramways would have proved a profitable source of income to the Government; but the great cost of their construction, from the manner in which the labour on them was engaged, precludes that hope now being realized; and in fact, from the manner in which the proper working of claims has been neglected, the income has scarcely hitherto met the working expenses. Now, however, under a more healthy system, and with more real work being done in the mines, the facilities offered by these tramways are being more availed of, and it may fairly be calculated that, even if worked by the Government, they will pay more than the cost of working if they do not absolutely pay interest on the outlay. A Report by the Provincial Engineer on the works completed and in progress to the end of the year 1869, printed by order of the Provincial Council, has been already forwarded to the Colonial Secretary, and a copy is also appended to this report. The length of tramways executed by the Provincial Government during the year was $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles; of tracks for sledge or pack-horse, $29\frac{1}{4}$ miles; of main roads, 5 miles; and in addition wharves and public offices were built at a total expenditure of £42,332 2s. 4d. for the year.

Population, Cost of Provisions, Wages, &c.

Early in the present year, 1870, from statements by petition and otherwise, as to distress prevailing on the Thames Gold Field, the Superintendent was moved to enter upon an inquiry into the condition of the population located thereon. In order to fairly conduct this inquiry, it was determined to engage the services of unbiassed individuals to obtain a census of the population, with a statement of the actual condition of each. By this means was demonstrated the absolute fallacy of the allegations made by the petitioners as to the results of the reactionary depression, and that census is available for reference regarding numerical status of the population, and the summary is given in the appendix hereto; which summary, however, does not include the population of Coromandel. Of the population shown as domiciled on the gold field, there were engaged in mining operations, or immediately dependent thereon, not more than 4,000, the remainder of those enumerated being employed or interested in the stores and similar occupations, in Grahamstown and Shortland. The natural advantages possessed by the Thames in its sea board, and the easily accessible market of Auckland, have caused the cost of living to be far below that of any other gold field.

A miner, with ordinary frugality, is able to maintain himself for the sum of 15s. per week, while wages have averaged for the year, 36s. per week. There will be found appended a detail of the cost of provisions and other supplies.

Coromandel.

During the year 1869, Coromandel, originally proclaimed a gold field in 1862, but subsequently abandoned, has, by the discovery of auriferous quartz on the summit of the Tokatea ranges, followed by that on the Tiki, caused attention to be again directed to its resources. This has resulted in the working of a great number of claims on these ranges, which have yielded to trials very valuable results. As yet, however, the claims are not sufficiently developed, and there is a want of crushing machinery, which want when supplied will evidence that Coromandel must assume a very important position in the gold-producing fields of the Colony.

Prospects.

By the hearing and determining of applications for leases of auriferous ground, which have been carried on with more energy and rapidity since the close of the year 1869, land which was virtually locked up from work is being again opened and occupied. This, with the termination of the scrip mania, has been productive of *bonâ fide* work, and consequently the Thames is in a better state than ever before; and it may be safely predicated that during the year 1870 more ground will be occupied in positive mining work than hitherto, that the yield of gold will steadily increase, while the experience gained during its sharp trial will have resulted in a lessened cost of production.

Appended to this Report are several valuable tables, showing in detail the subjects on which information has been asked by the resolution of the House of Representatives.

There is not in the towns on the gold field any system of sewerage nor any general water supply. The water used for domestic purposes is obtained by storage of the rainfall, or by wells sunk in contiguity to the dwelling-houses. This is a defect which will probably meet with a remedy by the establishment of a local company to supply water obtained from the fresh-water streams at a point above where it is affected by the operations of the crushing machines.

Auckland, 10th June, 1870.

RETURN of the Quantity of GOLD EXPORTED from the PROVINCE of AUCKLAND for the Year ending 31st December, 1869.

						Quantity.	Value.
						OZ.	£
For Quarter ending 31st March, 1869	...	...	...	...	...	41,674	131,273
" " " 30th June	...	...	...	...	...	13,407	42,233
" " " 30th September	...	...	...	...	...	20,743	72,469
" " " 31st December	...	...	...	...	...	40,557	139,083
Total						116,881	385,058

RETURN of QUARTZ CRUSHED and GOLD OBTAINED from BATTERIES, THAMES GOLD FIELD, from 1st March, 1869, to 30th April, 1870.

Locality.	Name of Battery.	Quartz Crushed.	Gold obtained.	Remarks.
		Tons. cwt.	Oz. dwt.	
Tararu	Wild Missouri	1,365 0	550 0	Crushing for own Company.
"	Russell and Co.	1,468 0	1,096 0	" " public commenced Nov., 1869.
"	Flora McDonald	308 0	89 0	" " " " Feb., 1870.
"	Brown and Campbell's	2,050 0	2,023 12	" " " " Oct., 1869.
Shellback	Partington's	765 0	935 0	" " " " Nov., 1869.
"	Clarkson's	400 0	550 0	Have been idle about three months.
"	Bleazard's	2,100 0	3,150 0	" " " " four months.
Kurunui	Kurunui	10,883 0	46,025 0	30 stampers engaged for own Company, and 18 for public.
"	Shotover	3,600 0	9,267 0	Crushing for own Company.
"	Deep Lead	500 0	650 0	" " "
Moanataiari.	Pioneer	1,873 6	1,643 9	" " public.
"	Star of the South	300 0	150 0	" " own Company, commenced May, [1870.
"	Whau	1,657 11	1,266 12	" " own Company.
"	United Service	300 0	130 0	" " public; been idle about seven [months.
"	Victoria	8,397 0	7,078 0	" " own Company.
"	Morning Star	200 0	150 0	" " " commenced March, [1870.
"	Tramway	1,857 10	2,696 0	" " public.
"	Thames	3,954 0	4,551 0	" " "
"	Goodall's	1,932 0	3,570 0	" " " Have been idle about three [months.
Waiotahi	Weston's	1,696 4	2,689 18	" " public.
"	Australasian	470 0	429 0	" " "
"	Criterion	800 0	679 19	" " own Company.
"	Waiotahi	2,258 0	2,750 0	" " public.
"	Souter's	1,042 0	2,648 13	" " "
"	Hauraki	2,520 15	4,627 18	" " "
"	Golden Crown	2,083 0	11,950 17	" " own Company.
Karaka	McIsaac's	100 0	250 0	Not working.
"	Lucky Hit	...	...	Not working; cannot obtain particulars.
"	Haleyon	110 14	10 15	Crushing for public.
"	Onehunga	90 0	100 7	" " " Working about three months.
"	Hokianga	1,130 0	820 0	" " "
"	Atlas	50 0	20 0	Not working.
"	Perry's	180 0	150 0	Crushing for public.
"	Bull's	460 0	510 0	" " "
"	Vickery's	590 0	1,180 0	" " "
"	Una	2,900 0	2,905 13	" " own Company commenced Jan. [1870.
"	Sir William Wallace	500 0	100 0	Not working.
Hape	S. H. Smith's	700 0	1,403 5	Crushing for public.
"	Greenway's	314 0	613 11	" " "
		61,905 0	119,410 9	

The above Return does not show all the gold taken from the batteries, for in many instances the gold is taken away without being weighed and the results ascertained.
The returns of gold from smelting works and works where gold is extracted from the tailings are not included.

REPORTS ON THE GOLD FIELDS

RETURN of DIVIDEND-PAYING COMPANIES.

THE following returns, which have been prepared by Mr. Martin Sholl, Sharebroker, show the number of dividend-paying Companies upon the Thames Gold Fields, on the 25th May, 1870:—

Names of Companies.	Capital.	Amount of Share.	Last Dividend.	Date.	Total Amount of Dividend per Share.
	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
All Nations	54,000	10 0 0	0 6 0	May 19 ...	1 7 0
Belfast	28,000	5 0 0	0 2 0	May 20 ...	0 5 6
City of Glasgow	40,000	10 0 0	0 3 0	Feb. ...	1 11 0
Dauntless and Sink to Rise	16,600	5 0 0	0 3 0	Oct. ...	0 3 6
Eureka	21,470	1 0 0	0 3 0	Sept. ...	0 5 6
Flying Cloud	21,000	5 0 0	0 1 0	April 28 ...	0 1 0
Great Republic	12,800	5 0 0	0 2 6	Oct. ...	0 2 6
Golden Crown	192,000	1,000 0 0	7 0 0	April 26 ...	485 13 0
Inverness	55,000	5 0 0	0 1 6	April 5 ...	0 2 6
Kuranui	100,000	10 0 0	0 8 0	May 19 ...	1 1 0
Kelly's	20,000	5 0 0	0 3 0	Sept. ...	0 3 0
Long Drive	6,000	5 0 0	1 0 0	April 28 ...	56 0 0
Mariner's Reef	3,000	5 0 0	0 19 6	April 29 ...	1 4 0
Pride of the West	11,250	2 10 0	0 1 0	April 27 ...	0 1 0
Pride of the Karaka	40,000	5 0 0	0 1 6	Jan. ...	0 2 6
Shotover No. 1	224,000	10 0 0	0 3 6	Jan. ...	0 6 0
Tapu Great Republic	9,218	8 0 0	0 6 0	Oct. 20 ...	0 6 0
Thames	60,000	10 0 0	1 0 0	Aug. 2 ...	1 0 0
Una	75,000	5 0 0	0 1 0	May 1 ...	0 2 0
Vale of Avoca	9,500	1 0 0	0 1 0	March 7 ...	0 1 0
Whau	25,000	5 0 0	0 15 0	Jan. , 1869	0 15 0
Young American	9,000	2 0 0	0 1 6	April 29 ...	0 1 6
Dixon's, No. 1	24,000	10 0 0	0 8 0	Dec. 3 ...	1 4 9
					= £219,008 0 0

From the above Return it will be seen that there are twenty-three Companies paying dividends, while towards the end of last year there were only eleven. The capital represented amounts to £1,056,238. This Return shows only what has resulted since these claims have been converted into Companies, and does not include the magnificent returns (as in the case of the Shotover or Hunt's Claim) prior to their being converted into Companies. Neither does it include the returns from the ground often successfully worked as claims.

RETURN of BATTERIES, &c., erected or in course of erection.

Name.	Stampers.	Berdans.	Buddies.	Concentrators.	Amalgamating Barrels.	Wheeler's Pans.	Chilian Mills.	Steam Engines.	Nominal Power.	Water Wheels.	Size Wheels.	Remarks.
KARAKA CREEK :—											Feet	
McIsaacs's Gold Mining Company	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	4	...	...	Not working.
Lucky Hit Battery	21	1	...	...	2	...	...	1	16	...	...	Not working.
Halcyon	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	30	Not working.
Hokianga	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	12	1	30	Working.
Onehunga	6	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	28	Working.
Coulabak	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	30	Not working.
Atlas	8	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	8	...	...	Not working.
Perry's Battery	10	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	18-inch turbine, working.
Una Company	26	1	...	...	...	...	3	1	25	1	25	Working.
Kauweranga	8	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	10	...	...	Not working.
Bull's Battery	11	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	30	Working.
Vickery's Battery	4	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	25	Working.
Sir William Wallace	15	...	...	...	1	2	...	1	10	...	...	Not working.
	138	5	...	...	6	2	5	7	85	7	...	
WAIOTAHU CREEK :—												
Weston's Battery	16	1	...	...	2	...	...	1	30	...	...	Working.
Australasia Battery	20	...	...	...	2	4	...	1	30	...	...	Not working.
Criterion Battery	17	1	...	...	2	...	...	1	12	...	...	Working.
	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	In course of erection.
Battery opposite Nonpareil } Claim, no name }	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	8	...	...	Not working.
Waiotahi Battery	15	2	...	1	...	...	2	1	14	...	...	Working.
Souter's Battery	16	1	...	...	2	...	2	1	20	...	...	Working.
Hauraki Battery	24	1	...	...	2	...	...	1	20	...	...	Working.
Golden Crown Battery	20	1	...	...	2	3	...	1	30	...	...	Working.
	146	7	...	1	12	7	4	8	164	...	...

RETURN of BATTERIES, &c.—continued.

Name.	Stampers.	Berdans.	Buddies.	Concentrators.	Amalgamating Barrels.	Wheeler's Pans.	Chilian Mills.	Steam Engines.	Nominal Power.	Water Wheels.	Size Wheel.	Remarks.
MOANATAIARI CREEK :—												
Pioneer Battery ...	9	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	8	...	...	Working.
Star of the South ...	10	1	...	...	1	...	...	1	12	...	...	Not working.
Whau ...	10	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	10	...	...	Not working.
Launceston Battery ...	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	4	...	...	Not working.
Victoria Battery ...	25	2	2	1	...	...	...	2	30	...	...	Working.
Morning Star Battery ...	11	2	...	...	2	...	...	1	14	...	...	Working.
Tramway Battery ...	12	1	...	...	1	...	...	1	10	...	...	Working.
Thames Battery ...	40	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	40	...	...	Working.
Goodall's Prince Alfred Battery ...	23	1	...	1	...	4	...	1	16	...	...	Working.
	148	8	2	2	5	4	...	10	144	...	...
KURANUI CREEK :—												
Deep Lead Battery ...	9	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	12	...	...	Working.
Hunt's Shotover Battery ...	13	1	...	1	1	3	...	2	20	...	...	Working.
Kuranui Gold Mining Com- pany Battery ...	48	2	2	...	4	...	...	1	30	...	...	Working.
	70	3	2	1	6	3	...	4	62	...	...
SHELLBACK :—												
Partington's Prince Arthur Battery ...	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	12	...	...	Working.
Clarkson's Gold - Discoverer Battery ...	13	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	12	...	...	Working.
Bleazard's Battery ...	9	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	20	...	...	Not working.
	32	2	...	...	...	...	...	3	44	...	...
TARARU CREEK :—												
Wild Missouri ...	21	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	35	Inch turbine, equal to 30-horse power. Inch turbine; working. Not working.
Russell's Battery ...	30	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	1	45	
Flora McDonald ...	20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	15	
Brown and Campbell's ...	40	...	...	...	4	...	...	1	34	1	22	
Ballarat and Clunes ...	30	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	25	...	...
	141	...	...	...	0	...	...	2	59	4	...	
HAPE CREEK :—												
Hape Company Battery ...	8	1	...	...	...	...	...	7	1	...	...	Working.
Greenway's Battery ...	9	3	...	...	...	...	...	8	1	...	...	Not working.
	17	4	...	...	...	...	...	15	2	...	...
TOTAL AMOUNT of BATTERIES :—												
Tararu ...	141	...	...	...	8	...	...	2	59	4	...	No. Batteries. 5
Shellback ...	33	2	...	...	...	...	...	3	44	...	...	3
Kuranui ...	70	3	2	1	6	3	...	4	62	...	...	3
Waitotahi ...	146	7	...	1	12	7	4	8	164	...	...	8
Moanataini ...	148	8	2	2	5	4	...	10	144	...	...	9
Karaka ...	138	5	...	...	6	2	5	7	85	7	...	13
Hape ...	17	4	...	...	...	...	...	2	15	...	...	2
	693	29	4	4	37	16	9	36	573	11	...	43

REPORTS ON THE GOLD FIELDS

RETURN of the NUMBER and TONNAGE of VESSELS arrived at the Port of THAMES during the Quarters ended 31st December, 1869, and 31st March, 1870, distinguishing those Vessels exclusively employed in the Passenger Trade from those employed in the Carrying Trade. Showing the Number employed in the Trade from Auckland and the Number from other Ports. Also, the Number of Vessels Entered, and the Number of Vessels having general Transires.

RETURN for QUARTER ending 31st December, 1869.

Date 1869.	AUCKLAND TRADE.						OTHER PORTS.						Timber and Coals.		Entered and Transires.		Total Vessels.	Total Tonnage.	Remarks.	1st. November, Commenced to enter Vessels.					
	Steamers.			Sailing Vessels.			Total.			Steamers.			Sailing Vessels.			Total.					Coals.	Entered.	Transires.		
	Passenger.	Tons.	Carrying.	Tons.	Number.	Tons.	Passenger.	Tons.	Carrying.	Tons.	Number.	Tons.	Vessels.	Tons.											
October	51	3,535	24	984	82	1,472	157	5,991	27	1,446	10	270	94	2,176	131	3,892	22	15	...	288	9,883				
November	50	3,475	34	1,775	68	1,221	152	6,471	22	510	11	339	121	2,759	154	3,608	72	12	111	195	306	10,079			
December	61	4,572	42	2,194	52	906	155	7,672	23	568	9	275	99	2,202	131	3,045	44	12	77	309	286	10,717			
Total	162	21,582	100	4,953	202	3,599	464	20,134	72	2,524	29	884	314	7,137	416	10,545	138	39	188	404	880	30,679			
RETURN for QUARTER ending 31st March, 1870.																									
1870.																									
January	81	7,214	35	1,814	54	949	170	9,977	21	571	10	270	125	2,444	156	3,285	77	17	100	226	326	13,262			
February	64	7,396	22	976	37	513	123	8,885	20	460	10	270	89	1,761	119	2,491	54	12	70	172	242	11,376			
March	61	5,441	26	1,091	35	664	122	7,196	23	529	10	270	100	1,811	133	2,610	47	14	69	186	255	9,806			
Total	206	20,051	83	3,881	126	2,126	415	26,058	64	1,560	30	810	314	6,016	408	8,386	178	43	239	584	823	34,444			

RATES OF PROVISIONS, LABOUR, &c., THAMES GOLD FIELDS.

Flour ...	£14	0	0	per ton, 16s. per cwt.
Potatoes	3	0	0	per ton.
Bread ...	0	0	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 lb. loaf.
Beef ...	0	0	4	to 6d. per lb.
Mutton ...	0	0	3	to 5d per lb.
Tea ...	0	2	6	to 3s. per lb.
Sugar ...	0	0	5	to 6d. per lb.
Tobacco ...	0	4	0	to 5s. per lb.
Coals, Bay of Islands, in quantities taken from ship's side, 20s. per ton.				
Timber, 12s. per 100 feet.				
Horse, man, and dray, 15s. per day.				
Labourers' wages, 30s. to 36s. per week.				
Carpenters' ditto, 48s. to 54s. per week.				

BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES.

The following is a return for the Thames District for the year ending 31st March, 1870:—
Births, 410 ; Deaths, 180 ; Marriages, 77.

CUSTOMS REVENUE AT THE PORT OF THAMES FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL AND MAY, 1870.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Spirits ...	101	13	0	224	5	2	513	0	1
Wines ...	6	18	5	38	15	3	10	12	0
Beer ...	...	...	...	2	7	6	14	5	0
Tobacco ...	...	...	...	20	13	9	55	5	0
Cigars ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9	0	0
Tea ...	3	0	0	...	...	...	4	4	0
Sugar ...	5	4	7	5	0	10	10	16	11
Goods by weight ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11	5	0
£116 16 0				£261 2 6			£628 8 0		
Arms Fees ...	18	8	0	26	1	0	31	0	0
Merchant Shipping Fees ...	0	7	0	0	13	6	...	...	...
Warehouse Duty ...	...	...	...	19	15	10	...	...	...
£135 11 0				£337 12 10			£659 10 0		

Thames was proclaimed a warehousing port on the 21st March, 1870. The Custom House was opened in the month of March, during which month £117 was received.

