

Mount Ida, Wakatipu, and Tuapeka. In the two latter districts, renewed activity in the direction of quartz mining has taken place recently, and I am informed is likely to result in the successful establishment of this most important branch of mining industry. Reefs have also been discovered in the Teviot district. The Bendigo and Carrick range quartz mines, in the Dunstan district, have proved and are proving a considerable success (see Reports appended); recent crushings showing a very handsome average of gold to the ton. The exceptional severity of the present winter militates very much against the returns at this high elevation; the water freezes upon the tables, even if the companies are fortunate enough to get it upon their ground at all.

The reefs at Wangapeka, in the Province of Nelson, and at Pelorus, in the Province of Marlborough, have been for the time abandoned, although proved to be auriferous, the yield of gold not having proved sufficient to warrant the large expenditure, under present circumstances, entailed by the continuance of mining operations. That these reefs will be profitably worked I have little doubt, when, by the settlement of the country, access to the reefing districts becomes more easy, and the price of labor and provisions is reduced within the limits of moderate profits from the mines. In the immediate neighborhood of the town of Wellington indications of gold have been found; and, in the expectation of finding payable reefs, no less than twenty-six companies have been formed and registered. A Berdan crushing machine has been erected near Baker's Hill, to which locality the prospecting (by tunnelling and otherwise) has hitherto been chiefly confined. A few tons have been crushed at the Berdan, but with what general result I have not been able to ascertain; it is sufficient, however, to remark that as yet no valuable or well defined reef has been discovered.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The absence of comparative statements and returns renders statistical tables compiled upon any uniform system very imperfect; it is, however, a necessity in the case of a first compilation, which will be easily understood. I have already taken the opportunity, in an earlier part of this report, to remark upon the difficulty of obtaining essential information, owing to the scattered character of the gold workings, and the entire absence of any machinery for the purpose. In Victoria the Department of Mines have direct supervision of the gold fields official staff, including the Wardens, Mining Registrars, Mining Surveyors, and Engineers, all of whom report periodically, according to their several specialities, the minutest details regarding the district in which they are located. Forms, the construction of which have been based upon the experience of nearly twenty years, and which appear to be exhaustive of all valuable information, are furnished to the officers designated; an important part of whose duty would seem to be the seeing that these are filled up intelligently and with punctuality. The Banks and Mine Managers throughout the colony recognise the importance of trustworthy statistics, and do not hesitate, under the seal of individual privacy, to furnish the department with information of a most valuable character, when massed with figures, for the purposes of certain general conclusions. Under the Victorian Government, the advantages of organization are made the most of, and the result is such a report as the "Mineral Statistics of the Colony," annually presented to Parliament. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that in New Zealand things are very different; the Wardens are few in number; their jurisdiction extends over large districts sparsely and intermittently populated; half their time is spent in the saddle—their most important work is in the field. Had they the taste or inclination, they have little time for collection of statistics, even did the nature of their duties place these in their way. I must here express my obligation to these officers, who, under such difficulties, which I have but hinted at, have been good enough to furnish the Reports appended hereto; which will be found almost historical as to the districts under their charge, and which, I have no hesitation from personal knowledge in asserting, convey most reliable and intelligent information.

The official status of the Mining Engineers and Surveyors differs in almost every province; but as in no instance are they in any way responsible to the Colonial Government, they could not with any show of reason be called upon to furnish returns, the compilation of which would be a work requiring daily attention, some expense, and considerable responsibility. With regard to the Banks, Mine Owners, and Managers, it is only very recently that they have been asked to afford specific information. The banks, without exception, have expressed their desire to meet the views of the Government, and have assented to furnish in future the required returns; and I have no doubt that, when the subject is fully understood, the Mine Owners and Managers will, to a man, take the same course. The approximate character of the present statistics will, I am justified in thinking, be superseded next year by tables constructed on an accurate basis, so far as the circumstances of the colony permit.

C. E. HAUGHTON.

July 16, 1872.