

Crown, by allowing the rent to be considered as part of purchase money. If this could be arranged, many of the men who leave the district to settle down in one of the adjoining Colonies would no doubt form homes for themselves here.

I forward the usual returns of revenue, &c. The annual report of the Brunner Coal Mine was posted for your information some days since.

The Provincial Secretary, Nelson.

I have, &c.,

CALEB WHITEFOORD, Warden.

WESTLAND.

No. 8.

Mr. Warden REVELL to the UNDER SECRETARY for the GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Greymouth, April, 1873.

In compliance with your circular, dated 12th February, 1873, I have the honor to furnish the following general report on the district under my charge:—

During the past year there is a marked depression visible in mining operations generally throughout the district. Some small patches of new ground have been discovered, but not of any extent or nature to cause a rush, or require special remark. The remarkable dryness of the weather during the past five months has tended considerably towards this depression, by the total cessation of all water supply, which is the great mainstay and motive power of all the workings in the district. In many instances miners have been compelled to suspend all operations for the time, and seek other employment, whilst others have abandoned mining pursuits, and entered upon more settled occupations. This will also account in some measure for the great falling off in the number of miners' rights.

In April, 1873, a quartz mining lease was applied for on the Grey Coal Reserve, fronting on the river at the gorge just above Brunnerton, but the applicants abandoned the ground after two months' trial, the leaders not being gold-bearing.

Many of the rich claims of long standing on the Stoney Leads and South Beach have been fairly wrought out, and the water-wheel and other appliances removed. The North Star Company are still working the deep ground on the lead with the aid of their steam-engine (the only one in use in the district), and are averaging good returns, but the ground is nearly all wrought.

The Leviathan and Great Extended Water Races have been so seriously affected by the dry weather that they can only supply two or three claims on the lead. The black sand on the sea beach never appears to be wrought out, and always pays good wages when water can be obtained. Great opposition has always been made by the miners to the sale of any of the land along the lead between Greymouth and Paroa, and even to the Teremakau, as they consider the ground sufficiently auriferous to pay for working. A considerable extent of this ground has been taken up for residence areas by the miners and brought into cultivation as gardens, with comfortable cottages erected thereon.

In the New River Sub-District, the Hibernian and New River Water Race Companies are pushing on vigorously with the construction of their races. The Hibernian Race is six miles in length, and there are 370 chains constructed. The Government have consented to subsidize the company to the extent of one-third of the capital (£6,000) as the works progress; they have received the first advance on the works, amounting to £1,426 14s. 3d.

The New River Race is a much heavier undertaking, being ten miles in length, with heavy cuttings and expensive flumings to make. The Government have consented to subsidize the company to the extent of one-half the capital (£10,000). They have constructed 350 chains of the race, and received the first instalment of the advance, amounting to £1,872 16s. 6d., in January last.

In the township of Marsden the sections have been sold to the occupier at the upset price, £35 per acre, and a few of the unoccupied sections in good positions realized fair prices. This township is likely to form one of the centres of the district as the different roads through the district branch off at this point with the trunk road from Hokitika.

A township has also sprung up at Maori Creek, on the New River, about six miles further inland than Marsden, and will form a good centre for that portion of the district consequent on the construction of horse-tracks from them to Maori Gully in one direction, and German Gully in the other.

Clifton, which was formerly the centre of this locality, has quietly subsided, the storekeepers having all removed, leaving the camp to follow when circumstances will permit. The horse-track from Marsden to Clifton and Maori Creek, is in a very dilapidated condition, no repairs having been effected thereon during the past eighteen months; but I believe it is intended at an early date to form it into a dray road; if so, it will be a great boon to the miners and storekeepers.

In the Arnold Sub-District the population remains steady, and there is a fair return of gold therefrom. Great necessity exists for the construction of a horse-track from Maori Gully to the Stillwater Creek Diggings, where there are about 100 miners at work. It is the intention of the County authorities to make the track if they can let the contract; payment to be made in land.

Monthly sittings of the Resident Magistrate's and Warden's Courts have been regularly held at Maori Gully for the Arnold District, and at Clifton for that of the New River; an officer of police being stationed at each place, who acts as Clerk of the Court. Clifton being now deserted, will necessitate the removal of the camp to Maori Creek, and a police station should also be erected at Marsden.

There are only six Chinese working in the district near Clifton. Having on two or three occasions been rather roughly handled and hunted out of the gullies, they have been afraid to settle down; but fortunately the sergeant of police at Maori Gully was able to bring some of the ringleaders before the Court, which appears to have had a wholesome effect, for they now travel from place to place unmolested.