

## No. 10.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Kanieri, 15th April, 1873.

I have the honor to report as follows on the Kanieri District for the year ended 31st March, 1873. There have been no fresh discoveries of gold of any importance, but mining is being steadily carried on, and the community seems settled and contented. There has been a slight increase in the population, a few miners who formerly worked in the Totara District having removed to the Kanieri in consequence of the stoppage of the deep claims on Jones' Flat. Most of them have found remunerative employment in terrace claims about Woodstock.

About the beginning of November a rush set in to Arch Creek, on the south side of the Hokitika. For some time very little could be ascertained concerning the result of the workings. The majority of the men were shepherding the prospectors. No prospecting claim was, however, applied for, yet gradually the ground was tested, and proved sufficiently auriferous to induce its continued occupation. At present about one hundred men are employed there, and are earning good wages.

The police estimate the population of the district to be over one thousand souls, located as follows:—

Kanieri	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	200
Blue Spur	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	150
Arthur's Town	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	80
Kanieri River	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	40
Woodstock	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	350
South Beach	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	50
Arahura	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	50
Outlying Gullies	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	50
Hau Hau	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	50
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The Maori Reserve Company, I am informed, have at last struck gold; and although only small prospects have been obtained at present, there is every likelihood of the ground being fairly tested, and the shareholders express an opinion that before long the claim will yield them handsome returns for their large preliminary outlay. On March 31st the shaft had been sunk to a depth of 70 feet and drives put in north-west and south-east for a distance of 30 feet each way from the shaft. Wash-dirt, in which gold could now and then be seen, was struck at 43 feet from the surface, and continued till the shaft was 50 feet down. The number of men employed by the company is 24. Of these sixteen are at work on the mine in three shifts, and the other eight are employed principally in cutting timber for the drives, and for the supply of firewood to the engine. This is of 30 horse-power, and in addition to raising earth from the shaft, works the pumps, of which there are three—one ten-inch and the other two eight-inch, with eight-foot stroke. The ground is, as you are aware, held on lease (50 acres), and the company have laid down a tramway from the shaft to the boundary of the lease, for the purpose of supplying the mine with timber. In the event of this ground answering present expectations, it is probable that extensive workings will be opened in the neighbourhood.

There are several parties prospecting in the interior, but no intelligence has yet been received at this office of the results of their researches, except in one instance, where auriferous quartz was reported as having been found about one mile and a half to the south-west of the Kanieri Lake, near the north bank of the Styx River. The prospectors are now engaged bringing in a race for the purpose of obtaining water-power to crush the stone. The full value of the discovery of this reef cannot be known for some months, but gold can plainly be seen in the casing.

The completion of the Ross and Hokitika Road has already proved of great service to both districts, but some of the carriers continue to use the old route by the beach. It is of very great importance that a branch road should be constructed from the Mahinapua township, on the lake of the same name, to a point on the Ross Road distant from the lake about 50 or 60 chains. If this were done, I believe a great part of the heavy traffic between Hokitika and Ross would pass through the Mahinapua township. By this means water communication would be secured for nearly two-thirds of the distance between Hokitika and Ross; the value of the town lands of Mahinapua would be very largely increased; and the cost of maintenance of the Ross Road very much lessened. The branch line is very short, and there are no engineering difficulties to be encountered. I beg earnestly to call the attention of the Government to this subject.

With regard to the Coal Mining Association in this district, it is merely necessary for me to state that up to the present no very satisfactory results have been obtained. The Government have doubtless got from other sources (especially from Dr. Hector's report) fuller information than it is in my power to furnish.

With regard to water supply, my opinion, and indeed the opinion of every one at all acquainted with the subject, is, that were a race constructed (to carry, say, from sixty to eighty sluice-heads) from the Kanieri Lake to Blue Spur, Big Paddock, and the various terraces such a race would command, the yield of gold in the district would be enormously increased, and steady remunerative employment be provided for a much larger population than is at present located here. Vast areas of ground are now lying idle which could then be profitably worked.

A portion of the Kanieri township was sold on 2nd December, 1872, by the Waste Lands Board, much to the satisfaction of the residents; and the improved appearance of the main street, owing to the erection of new buildings on the alienated portions, proves the wisdom of having given a better tenure of the holdings.

I have &c.,  
G. G. FITZGERALD,  
Warden.

The Under Secretary for the Gold Fields,  
Wellington.