

## MARLBOROUGH GOLD FIELDS.

## No. 4.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Picton, 5th May, 1879.

I have the honor to forward herewith the annual returns of the Marlborough Gold Fields, and a short report for the period ended 31st March, 1879.

*Ravenscliff and Queen Charlotte Sound Gold Fields.*—In these districts there are at present no alluvial diggings; several leases have recently been issued for quartz claims, but at present only two are worked. The Ravenscliff Gold-Mining Company (Limited), hold four quartz claims in the Ravenscliff District, only one of which is at present actually worked. The representative of this company reports as follows concerning the working of this claim during the past twelve months: "The claim is situated at Cape Jackson, and is known as the Turner Claim. The drives have been retimbered, and the rails and sleepers of tramways relaid where necessary. The battery has been repaired, building renewed, and battery site and wharf restored in a substantial manner. No crushing has yet taken place under the auspices of this company, for the reason that the battery has not been available. The time has, however, been well employed in opening up the mine for effectively carrying out subsequent operations, and a very large body of stone of a generally promising character has been rendered available for the stampers. Many works of a minor character have been carried out during the year, amongst which may be named underground driving to the extent of about 631 feet. Crushing is expected to be resumed at an early date." The only other claim requiring notice in this district is the one situated at Golden Point, the property of the Golden Point Gold-Mining Company. It appears that a great deal of sinking and driving has been done, and preparations made to erect steam pumping gear. The mining manager speaks hopefully of the future prospects of this company. No crushing has yet been done on this claim. Hitherto this company have adopted the wise policy of endeavouring to open up and develop the resources of the mine before incurring heavy expenses in the shape of machinery.

*Wairau Gold Fields.*—Only one lease for a quartz claim has been issued in this district—viz., for the Picton and Havelock Gold-Mining Company. This claim was previously known as the Sutherland Claim: it is situated on a spur on the Wairau side of a range of hills, dividing between the Wairau and the Wakamarina, and near Bartlett's Creek. The company having only very recently commenced work on this claim, there is very little to report concerning their progress. A contract has been let for driving 250 feet. It is reported that reefs are numerous in this district, and the company expect very soon to be able to test the payable nature of some of these reefs.

*Onamalutu (Wairau Gold Fields) Alluvial Diggings.*—There are a few men at work in this valley, from which a very good show of gold has been formerly obtained. It is presumed that a sufficiently strong inducement must now be found in the shape of payable gold, or these diggings would have been abandoned long ago.

*Pelorus or Wakamarina Gold Field Alluvial Diggings.*—There is little to report concerning this district. The population has not increased since the last annual report by my predecessor on the 1st April, 1878. The long-neglected terraces mentioned in his report as at that time creating a great amount of excitement have not turned out so profitable as the miners expected, and several of the numerous claims then marked out in Arthur's Terrace have been abandoned. The miners in this district complain, and, I believe, not without reason, that they have to work under great disadvantages. This gold field is situated about fifteen or twenty miles from Havelock; the country is for the most part rough dense bush, and the so-called roads for more than half the year may be described as almost impassable. The miners state that owing to the bad roads their stores when placed on their claims cost them nearly double the usual market price, and that no poor man can, without the assistance of an occasional rich find, work long under such disadvantages. Rich finds have for a very long period been the exception, not the rule. One or two companies have been formed for more extensively and systematically working the ground. One party occupying what is known as the Gorge Claim have for some time been occupied in endeavouring to divert the course of the river Wakamarina for a short distance, in hopes of finding a deposit of gold in the present river-bed. I am informed that a great deal of their work was destroyed by the late flood. Others are amalgamating for the purpose of bringing up water to sluice portions of the terraces; but at present none of these works are sufficiently far advanced to provide matter for any report. In conclusion, I have to say that, notwithstanding the present unsatisfactory position of mining matters in this district, and although very little progress can be reported for the past year on the Marlborough Gold Fields, I am of opinion that we possess in this country a large tract of valuable mineral land, and that, either by accident or by the judicious employment of that very essential element, "capital," rich discoveries will yet be made.

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

J. ALLEN, Warden.

## NELSON GOLD FIELDS.

## No. 5.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Collingwood, 1st May, 1879.

I have the honor to enclose the statistics for the year ending 31st March, 1879.

During this period mining transactions have not been of a satisfactory nature. Alluvial mining has remained at about the same standard as it was at the time of my last report, and the attempt made by the Phoenix Company, in Cole's Gully, to work a quartz reef on which they expended a large