

tions and hardships for the present with a view of ultimate reward. To sustain them in this belief, the only assurance, as far as I know, they require is, that at the first practicable moment their country will be connected by railway with the East Coast and Nelson, roads and harbours constructed, and opportunity afforded them of obtaining provisions at a reasonable cost, and giving in exchange the natural products of the West Coast.

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

EDW. SHAW, Warden.

WESTLAND GOLD FIELD.

(Including part of Nelson South-West Mining District.)

No. 9.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Greymouth, June, 1879.

I have the honor to forward herewith the statistical returns, and to make the following report on the district under my charge for the year ending 31st March, 1879 :—

I regret to say that there has been a great depression and general stagnation in commercial affairs, while the population shows a further decline during the year, and mining operations have fallen off to an equal extent.

The alluvial mining on the South Beach, Paroa, Rutherglen, New River and its tributaries, Maori Creek, Arnold, and Stillwater in the Westland Gold Fields, and the North Beach to Razorback, Jones's Flat, Blackball Creek, in the Nelson South-West Gold Fields, is principally maintained by the owners of water-rights in those localities, who have erected comfortable houses and taken up small portions of land for cultivation.

Four of the gold-mining leases taken up last year on the South Beach have been abandoned in consequence of the very wet and dangerous nature of the ground, caused by the side of the hill slipping down bodily and blocking up the tunnel.

The works on the New River Water-race are still in abeyance for want of funds. Small quantities of water are being utilized in the upper portion of the race, but the demand is very limited.

At Notown the population stands about the same as last year. There is a fair average yield of gold from the surrounding gullies. The workings are all alluvial, and in many instances a considerable amount of time and labour has to be spent in the construction of tunnels and other works before any results are obtained.

In August last some good prospects in the quartz reefs on the Paparoa Range, near Brunnerton, were found, when a general rush was made, and thirty applications were lodged for gold-mining leases. Sixteen of them are now in force ; the others have been either refused or since abandoned for want of capital, and from the general depression of business on the coast.

Two gold-mining leases have also been applied for on the Blackball Range, but they have not been finally dealt with, pending the completion of the surveys.

There are about three hundred and fifty Chinese at work in the various creeks and gullies in the district, making fair wages, and giving high prices for water-races wherever available ; they are noted for their quiet and orderly demeanour and general industry.

Greenstone Sub-district.—No new ground has been opened up for mining purposes, and mining matters, as a consequence, have been very quiet. The population has decreased since last report, being then estimated at 750, and now the estimate is 550.

During the year that is past the Erin-Go-Bragh Company's water-race has been completed, terminating at Hayes' Terrace, adjoining the Teremakau River, the length being seven miles and a half, and cost of construction between £6,000 and £7,000.

At Quinn's and Hayes' Terraces a number of claims are now buying the company's water, and a good many more claims in both places are preparing to use the water. So far, those claims that have been using the company's water for hydraulic sluicing have had satisfactory results, and there is little doubt that the company will dispose of all the water they can command.

At Quinn's Terrace there are about fifty-four miners employed, and at Hayes' Terrace and Payne's Gully fifty. These are all said to be working with average results.

At Cape Terrace and Liverpool Terrace about thirty men are at work, and most of them are doing fairly. There is some prospecting going on at Cape Terrace, and it is very probable that there will be more claims taken up there soon.

At Duke's Terrace there are ten miners at work, who are doing very well, having extended claims, and a good supply of water of their own for hydraulic sluicing.

At Revell's Terrace there are about twenty men mining, but these cannot be said to be doing much.

There are upwards of one hundred Chinese in the district, scattered along the banks of the Greenstone Creek principally. They have had poor times of it during the past year. Owing to the unusual quantity of rain that has fallen, and consequent flooded state of the creeks, in the beds of which they chiefly work, their workings have been swamped out time after time, and yet they have gone to work after every successive flood to repair damages, when most Europeans would have abandoned all in disgust. The Chinese in this district are very inoffensive, industrious, and persevering, and during their residence of about six years not a case of theft or other crime has been laid to their charge.

On the whole the district may be considered as fairly prosperous.

The revenue for the past year, exclusive of gold duty, spirit licenses, fees, &c., has been £304 5s. ; the number of registrations issued, 269 ; Warden's Court cases, 5 ; mining applications disposed of, 150.