

Ravenscliff Claim.—The Ravenscliff Company holds leases of several claims in this district. The result from the working of the claims to the present date has not been very satisfactory. I obtain my information from the annual report of this company published in London. It appears by this report that, during the year ended 30th June, 1880, six crushings of stone have taken place. Results as follow: 1,056 tons of stone crushed, yielding 320 oz. gold; maximum proportion of gold from stone crushed, 8 dwt. 16 gr.; minimum, 2 dwt. 14 gr.; average, say, about 6 dwt. 7 gr. per ton. The shareholders are informed that a great loss has been occasioned by a quantity of the gold escaping with the tailings. An elaborate system of assaying of tailings and of calculations has been published, apparently with the view of convincing all concerned that if this gold had not been lost the results would have been more satisfactory. It is perhaps unnecessary to extract any more information from this report. I may briefly state as follows: A new mine manager has been appointed, and it is the intention of the company to adopt a fresh system of saving the gold, the opinion of experts being that the present process of amalgamation is not suited to the extraction of such fine gold as is met with in the quartz of this mine. I conclude with copying a very suggestive paragraph from the directors' report: "The Board having made these arrangements (referring to proposed alterations in process of saving the gold) consider that the operations, which in the meantime have recently been kept within very moderate limits, should be vigorously resumed, and to that end they propose to make a call on the shares of the company very shortly." It would appear that the directors are determined to try and make their undertaking a success. A great amount of work has been done on the claim, capital has been invested in the mine by successive companies, and good stone has been at different times discovered. It will be a great disappointment if, after all their efforts, it is found that the gold cannot be obtained at a reasonable cost.

Coal Discovery.—Though not exactly within the limits of my duty to make any report concerning the late coal discoveries, I may say that I have recently visited the preliminary workings that have been undertaken to test the size and value of the Picton coal seams. The report published some time ago by Mr. McKay, of the Geological Department, concerning the coal deposits in this district will, I believe, prove to be a correct report, with the exception that the seams appear likely to prove much larger than he anticipated. The extent of the seams has of course not yet been proved. Probably in two or three months' time the value of the discovery will have been finally decided.

Estimated Revenue.—The following is the estimated revenue for the year ending 31st March, 1882:—Miners' rights, £200; business licenses, £25; registration, £7; water licenses, £5; Court fees, £3; rents of leases, £110: total, £350.

I have, &c.,

J ALLEN,

Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

NELSON GOLD FIELDS.

No. 5.

Mr. Warden BROAD to the UNDER-SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Nelson, 2nd April, 1881.

I have the honor to inform you that during the past year I have visited the Tadmor and Wangapeka Districts. At the old Tadmor and Sherry River diggings a limited number of men continue to earn moderate wages. At Wangapeka proper about a dozen men are still working the bed of the stream with apparently satisfactory results.

An effort is being made to test the value of the supposed line of reef known as Doran's. A prospecting association has been formed for that purpose. Scarcely any mining was done upon the reef at Wangapeka, although thousands of pounds were expended in machinery; and, the money being exhausted in this way, there were no means left for opening up and testing the reef. Creditors pressed, the companies had to throw up their leases, and wind up without anything having been done worth speaking of in the shape of mining. There is a large body of stone, forming what seems to be a well-defined reef, and it is satisfactory to know that its gold-bearing capabilities are to be put to the proof.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

LOWTHER BROAD.

No. 6.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Collingwood, 4th April, 1881.

I have the honor to enclose statistics, &c., required in your Circular No. 90.

Since taking charge of this district, on the 10th November, 1880, I have to report that very little progress appears to be making in it; rumours are rife of works being contemplated, and I have recommended that six new leases should be granted, situate at Mount Arthur, but, owing to the lateness of the season and the want of a pack-track, I fear that little work can be looked for in that locality until next spring, and until a thorough trial of the reefs there has been made. It is premature to offer an opinion as to the value of this new field.

A few days ago a sample of coarse gold was brought to me, alleged to have been obtained from the Goulard Downs, about nine miles from the forks of Brown's River and the Aorere; the finder, who was, at Mr. George Blackett's request, looking for a track to the Goulard Downs, informs me that his party found gold of a similar nature in all the creeks which they tried on the Downs, also several quartz reefs running in a northerly direction. The party had not means or time to test these reefs, but they are satisfied that alluvial gold is to be found in considerable quantities. This gold field is, however, practically shut up for want of a track about eight or ten miles long, which the pro-