

other hand there are few additions. The mining population consists mostly of the survivors of the old rush some eighteen years ago, who for the most part are settled down for life. They appear to be satisfied with small but steady returns, and in many portions of this locality, the Shotover, and its bordering terraces, there is abundant land untouched to yield them a living. It should be stated, however, that much of this ground is unworked on account of the limited supply of water at the high levels, which, of course, is an indispensable essential in working these sluicing claims. An instance of what can be done by energetic labour, combined with skilful knowledge and capital, may be seen at Skipper's Point, where an old resident, a miner, a Mr. John Aspinall, has a plant valued at about £3,000. A great deal of work has been done here, and all carried on with a system and object. His enterprise has been up to the present very successful, and the claim has yielded and continues to yield great quantities of gold, and there are years of remunerative work before them. Most of these alluvial claims are worked in parties of two or four men, and often in single areas held by one man. There is a prejudice against combination of forces, generally resulting in a mining company; the miners' experience is unfavourable to this step, and, as in the instance above mentioned, few have capital enough to undertake work on a large scale. There has lately become vacant a large claim held by the Shotover Terrace Company, or rather, the company being in course of liquidation, the ground will soon be open for occupation. This locality has proved very rich in times past, and a considerable track of country of similar formation and position is yet untouched in this neighbourhood. At Moke Creek and Moonlight, tributaries to the Shotover, the workings are mostly managed by the Chinese, and they bring down a steady return to the banks here. From the knowledge I have acquired of the land in the neighbourhood of the Shotover and its tributaries, I have no fear of the diminution of the yield of gold; indeed I believe that, should any wonderful discovery of a rich find attract any large number of miners, most of whom would bring more energy to bear on their labour than the settled population now working, there is a great probability of very extensive deposits being discovered.

*Arrow Division.*—Alluvial mining in this portion of the district has been allowed to flag until very recently, when it appeared to recover slightly, the attention of the many being called to the prospecting of the quartz reefs of Macetown, which place is about central of this division.

*Quartz Mining.*—This branch of mining industry has been more energetically followed in the Arrow division, and chiefly at Macetown. Many of these claims have shown good prospects, and were looked on very favourably by the public outside the gold fields as well as by the mining population of the district. Their early history and promise have been the subject of former reports, but I regret to state this year has not been marked with any great successes. There are many drawbacks to working these mines, which are situated at a considerable elevation, to which all timber and mining requisites have to be packed, over indifferent roads unsuitable for wheeled traffic. From the prospects I have seen I have good hopes of their ultimate success. When the working expenses are so heavy it is difficult to keep alive the interest among distant shareholders. The discovery of a quartz reef at the head of Lake Wakatipu, referred to in my predecessor's last report, has more than realized its first promise, and the proprietors have imported a plant of crushing machinery. Their prospects are very good, and I look forward to a favourable mention in next year's report of this claim.

*Gold Returns.*—The yield of gold in the respective divisions of my district, according to bank returns which have been kindly supplied me by the different bank agents, is as follows: Dunstan, 30,484 oz.; Wakatipu, 11,204 oz.: total, 41,688 oz.

*Agriculture and Settlement.*—I have to report very satisfactory progress under this very important head. The past harvest was most satisfactory, and vigorous preparations for next year have been made. Many of the agricultural leases, having matured, have passed into the lessees' hands as freeholds, and many more are likely soon to undergo the same change. There is a growing demand for land, which, in the immediate neighbourhood of the centres, is difficult to find, and the mining reserves are frequently the subject of application for settlement.

I have, &c.,

JACKSON KEDDELL,

Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

## No. 15.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Lawrence, 23rd May, 1881.

I have the honor to forward herewith statistical returns for the Tuapeka and Waikaia Gold Fields for the past year, and to report as follows:—

Gold mining in the Tuapeka District has been carried on with about the usual success; the principal part of the gold obtained in the district, as for some years past, has been won at the Blue Spur. Several of the original fifteen years' mining leases at that place have lately expired, and the Spur is now being resurveyed, as a preliminary to applications for new leases being disposed of. The area of the auriferous part of the Blue Spur, extending from Munroe's to Gabriel's Gully, was originally about 50 acres: about 18 acres has been worked out, and about 10 acres of the remainder has been worked by tunnelling on the rock bottom. A large yield of gold may therefore confidently be expected for many years, and, although a large portion of the richest land has been mined, the additional skill gained in working will go far to make what remains equally profitable. There are 135 miners at present employed there; and seven batteries of stamps, aggregating 105 heads, are kept almost constantly at work.

*Wetherstones.*—The cement workings here have not progressed so well as was expected. The original claim of the Wetherstones Cement Mining Company has been steadily worked, and has yielded some good dividends, but payable auriferous cement has not been traced beyond the boundaries of this claim. The Premier Company expended about £2,500 in erecting a battery of ten heads of stamps and prospecting the claim, but could obtain no payable results, and the machinery has been removed. The