

The Mont d'Or Company has been carrying on at the same time the working of its own ground together with that of the Mount Greenland Company, of which it has held a lease. This company has been working prosperously and paying dividends to its shareholders. The lease being now at an end, I understand the Mount Greenland Company is about to resume its ground and work it on its own account.

I cannot conclude my remarks upon the Totara sub-district without expressing my sense of the great loss sustained by the death of Mr. William Blane, for so many years Mining Registrar and Clerk of the Courts at Ross. Mr. Blane's long and intimate acquaintance with the district and its requirements, and his uniform courtesy and desire to assist all who required his help, have caused his loss to be a very sensible one both to myself and to the public; and all who were acquainted with his unfailing integrity and strict conscientiousness must feel that the community in which he lived has lost one of its most worthy and valuable members. I am glad to be able to say, in addition, how well I am satisfied with the manner in which Mr. Blane's place is filled by his successor, Mr. C. A. Barton.

Schools of Mines.—The chemistry classes have received from a recent visit of Dr. Black the stimulus which his scientific enthusiasm and masterly method of handling his subjects never fails to impart. The stay of Mr. McLymont upon the Coast, although his energies have to be distributed over a wide area and amongst many centres, is, I think, producing good fruit in the greater and more steady attention to the subject which is discernible in the different localities. I was unfortunately absent when Dr. Black was at Hokitika, but I am glad to hear that he expressed surprise and pleasure at the progress made by the Hokitika Chemistry Club. This progress has been due to the energy of one or two local amateurs, and to the systematic and scientific help of Mr. McLymont. The club now possesses a laboratory which, if not complete in its appliances, is yet orderly in its arrangements, and permits experiments to be carried on with some degree of efficacy. The collection of minerals also lately supplied through the Mines Department has proved a valuable acquisition and a source of much useful information.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of Mines, Wellington.

J. GILES, Warden.

No. 12.

Mr. Warden MACFARLANE to the UNDER-SECRETARY of MINES.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Okarito, 4th April, 1887.

I have the honour to forward herewith statistical returns for the year ended the 31st March, 1887, together with general report on the mining district under my charge during the same period.

Mining in this district is mostly confined to the old workings, and nothing during the past year has arisen to cause a change in the general aspect of affairs. Three parties have been out prospecting during the year—viz., Black and party, on Cook's River; Reider and party, Okarito Flat; and McFettrick and party, on the Waiho River; the two last being subsidized by the Westland County Council. Black and party after three weeks' exploration returned, having found the river too high to allow of working with any hope of success. Reider and party prospected by boring part of the Okarito Beach, and are now working ground that will pay about £2 per week per man. McFettrick and party are at work on the Waiho River—result not known, no report having been received since they went out. Tracks to give access to out-of-the-way diggings, and to open up land for settlement, are progressing slowly. A further judicious expenditure in this direction would greatly facilitate the work of the miner and prospector. The population remains about stationary, with this exception: that a few Chinamen are settling about the forks of the Okarito. It is to be regretted that, notwithstanding the great number of idle men said to be in other parts of the country, this district should be actually suffering for lack of what appears to be a chronic evil in other parts of the colony, when such extensive tracts of country in south Westland would give at least a good living to any one able and willing to work, and often something more. The black-sand beaches, so numerous and extensive in this district, out of which such rich returns were obtained by the first workers, will, I have reason to hope, be utilized in such a manner as will inaugurate a new era in our mining history.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of Mines, Wellington.

D. MACFARLANE, Warden.

No. 13.

Mr. Warden MACFARLANE to the UNDER-SECRETARY of MINES.

SIR,—

Jackson's Bay, 12th April, 1887.

I have the honour to forward herewith annual report on mining districts under my charge for the year ending 31st March, 1887, together with statistical returns for the same period.

During the past year a considerable increase in our mining population took place, due to the discoveries made last year in the southern part of the district. A number of leases were taken out on the Gorge River to work the nickeliferous deposits found there. This metal—named awaruite by Dr. Hector—is a compound of nickel and iron—two of nickel to one of iron; and at the time of discovery it was said to be worth 8s. per pound. It is found associated with great quantities of magnetite, or the black sand of our beaches, together with gold, platinum, and other metals; but great difficulties have been met with in working the river-bed owing to the number and size of the boulders, the heavy floods, and immense landslips that have prevailed during the past year. Another difficulty has arisen in trying to separate the magnetite from the awaruite, both being highly magnetic, and of about the same specific gravity. In the interest of those concerned I forwarded to a firm in Germany about 100lb. of the metals, and ores as found, for treatment, but