

No. 17.

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

SIR,—

Courthouse, Oamaru, 31st March, 1887.

I have the honour to report that mining affairs have been very quiet in the district under my charge during the past year. There has been no change in the number of miners employed in the field, and but little to note in the way of new works or discoveries. The only item of special interest in mining work has been the opening of a channel, or main tail-race, in Long Gully, which was completed in October, 1886, and has been in work ever since. This channel had long been required for the working of the east side of the spur leading up to Livingstone, but there had always been a difficulty, as to reach the Maerewhenua River, where the water and tailings would have to be discharged, it must be constructed in part through private property. By an amicable arrangement between the miners and the owners of the land this difficulty was obviated, and the race has been carried through the freehold land to the river. It is hoped that the effect of the opening of this channel will be to give permanent work to several small parties of miners for years to come. The yield of gold, so far as I can learn, has been about up to the average. As I have had to state in former reports, there is no escort from Maerewhenua, and gold finds its way from there to different places. Any estimate of yield must therefore be mere guesswork. The same people stay on year after year at Maerewhenua, and it must be presumed that they find it worth their while to do so. Most of them own a few cattle, and, as a rule, they seem to be fairly well off. There is a disposition on the part of some to take up small areas under section 60 of "The Mining Act, 1886," and some applications have been lodged, but none have as yet been dealt with. I forward the usual statistical returns.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of Mines, Wellington.

H. W. ROBINSON, Warden.

No. 18.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Dunedin, 19th April, 1887.

In forwarding the annual returns for the Hindon District for the twelve months ended the 31st March last, I have the honour to inform you that little or no change calling for special remark, so far as mining is concerned, has taken place in the district during the year.

In alluvial mining about the same number of miners as formerly have been and are still working in various parts of the field, the fact that almost the same individuals have been mining there continuously for years being a good indication that gold is still to be obtained in the district.

With respect to quartz-mining, two or three parties are at present working, the principal one being Lyders and party, who own the crushing-plant lately the property of the Don Company. Several hundred tons of stone, I am informed, have been crushed during the year, yielding from 4dwt. to 15dwt. to the ton. Operations have not been resumed, as was anticipated, at the Game Hen Reef, although it is still the intention of McQueen and party to do so.

The settlers on the deferred-payment and perpetual-lease lands are doing fairly well, and are steadily improving their selections.

The total population of the district is estimated at about 250.

It may, perhaps, be as well to mention in this report that a number of applications for mining privileges have been received and entertained at this office, as being more convenient for the applicants than any other, in connection with the recent alleged gold-discoveries by Sutherland and party on the West Coast, north of Milford Sound; but, pending the receipt of an official report relative to Sutherland and party's application for a special claim, there is no further evidence as to the precise nature or probable extent of such alleged discoveries. I may also state for your information that a license to search for asbestos in the vicinity of Milford Sound, and two others to search for antimony in the Silver Peak and Mount Hyde Survey Districts respectively, have been issued from this office during the year.

RETURN of the Area of Land held in the Hindon District as Special Claims, Mining Leases, Licensed Holdings, &c. (as per Circular No. 121).

Class of Holding.	Area.		
	A.	R.	F.
Special claims	0	0	0
Gold-mining leases	51	0	36
Licensed holdings	0	0	0
Mining claims not included in the above (approximate)...	40	0	0
Total	91	0	36

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of Mines, Wellington.

E. H. CAREW, Warden.

No. 19.

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

SIR,—

Invercargill, 14th April, 1887.

I have the honour to forward herewith the statistical returns for that part of the Otago Mining District formerly known as the Orepuki and Longwood District, under the Act of 1877.