

No. 15.

Mr. Warden Wood to the UNDER-SECRETARY of MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Clyde, 19th May, 1892.

I have the honour to enclose herewith annual statistics and report for the Wakatipu and Roxburgh divisions of the goldfield under my supervision.

WAKATIPU GOLDFIELDS.

My report for this portion of my district is not of such a cheering nature as I could wish, owing to the almost total collapse of the dredging boom. At the time of writing my last year's report there were either in actual working order or nearing completion twelve dredges to work as many dredging-claims; now, however, there are only four at work on two claims—the others either sold and removed to places outside the district, or about to be so dealt with, and upwards of forty dredging-claims have been cancelled. However, I am glad to be able to report that the miners as a body throughout the Wakatipu district are doing fairly well, and, although there are no sensational finds, the average yield is much better than has been the case for some years past. The revenue, too, has kept up well, and is a long way above the average.

Head of Lake Wakatipu.

Quartz.—There is only one quartz claim in this locality, owned by the Rees Valley Quartz-mining Company, Limited. The company are still prospecting, and with favourable indications, but their operations are much retarded by a heavy influx of water.

Alluvial.—About thirty miners are at work scattered about in the various gullies and streams running into the Rees River. The Dart River still remains practically unprospected and neglected, and will be so until there are greater facilities in the shape of tracks enabling the miners to move freely about.

Dredging.—Nil, every claim being cancelled.

Moke, Twelve-, Seven-, and Five-mile Creeks.

It is all alluvial mining in these localities, carried on principally by Chinese. There is nothing further to report than that the average earnings, although not very large, are satisfactory to the individuals concerned.

Upper Shotover.

Quartz.—The number of quartz mines in this locality remain at the same figure as last year—namely, two. The Phoenix Mine (owned privately) has had a good season, and an immense amount of work has been got through. 4,835 tons of quartz were crushed for 3,197oz. of gold, the yield per ton varying from 8dwts. to 1oz. The whole of the machinery has been overhauled, and the timber work of the battery renewed and prospecting vigorously carried on, proving the mine to be both a payable and lasting one. The senior manager is now in England engaged in floating a company to provide means to still further develop the mine, and for erecting more powerful machinery. The Gallant Tipperary Quartz-mining Company, Limited, has not such a good record as the Phoenix, but it is, without doubt, a valuable property if judiciously managed. 1,700 tons were put through the mill, yielding 424oz. of gold.

Alluvial.—The year's operations have been much better than for some seasons past, although water was not so plentiful as could be wished. The Londonderry Terrace Sluicing Company, No Liability, have pushed on their workings vigorously, and are now in full swing, their large water-race working satisfactorily, and with the great hydraulic power at their command are doing an immense amount of work presumably with satisfactory results. The other large sluicing ventures, Davis Brothers and R. Johnson, have each had a good season, but with what success pecuniarily is only known to themselves.

Dredging.—All the dredging-claims, with the exception of two, have been cancelled, and one dredge only is at work. The Sandhills Gold-mining Company, Limited: this dredge is worked by electricity, and is a dividend-paying concern.

Arthur's Point.

Dredging has been steadily pushed on here by the Sew Hoy Big Beach Gold-dredging Company, Limited, who have three dredges at work. This company is in the enviable position of being out of debt and dividend-paying. They are now averaging 100oz. per week.

Lower Shotover, Upper Kawarau.

Dredging-claims in this locality last year numbered nine; these are all cancelled, and the dredges sold and removed.

ARROW SUBDIVISION.

Arrow Junction, Kawarau, and Gibbston.

Alluvial.—There is nothing of interest to report upon in this locality.

Dredging.—Here, again, all the special claims have been cancelled.

Arrowtown.

Alluvial.—The Arrow Tunnel Sluicing Company (no liability) have pushed on their work, and have now nearly completed their necessary preliminary works, and hope soon to be able to test their claim. It is to be hoped the anticipations of a highly payable claim may be fulfilled. The land on the Crown Terrace lately resumed for mining purposes has not yet turned out to be the El Dorado that the miners thought it was. Payable gold has only been obtained in one or two claims, and the lead, if any, has not yet been defined.

Dredging.—Nil—all claims cancelled.