

account. This pump has in the past been the mainstay of the Thames, but for the future development of the field it is of very little service. A more modern pumping plant will have to be procured if the ground is to be prospected and worked at a greater depth.

In concluding my remarks on this important quartz-mining district, it may be stated that, although it is in a greatly depressed state at the present time, there is every probability of rich stone being again discovered at the deeper levels, and the mine-owners ought not to stand in the way of allowing the ground below a certain level to be worked by others who are prepared to find the capital to do so, seeing that they are not in a position to work it themselves. There was not only a falling-off in the yield of gold last year, but there were sixty-two miners less employed on the field than there were for the previous year. It is gratifying, however, to find that at the present time there are many inquiries for mining properties, and that English capitalists show inclination to invest their money in mining ventures in New Zealand. This is what is required to assist in developing our mineral wealth. People investing their capital in mining ventures are naturally desirous of holding such a title to the ground as affords them good security, so that in the event of expending large amounts in opening out claims and erection of machinery they will be sufficiently protected. In places where extensive mining operations have to be undertaken, involving considerable expenditure of capital, large areas of ground are required in one holding. While strongly deprecating the granting of large areas of ground to persons to hold for speculative purposes, it is indispensable to grant these areas to those who will work the ground in a *bonâ fide* manner. The mere cry of monopoly in cases of this kind is a misnomer. The ground is of no use to the individual miner. He has not the necessary capital to open it up, and therefore it is perfectly valueless to a man depending on his own individual labour. Capital and labour must go hand in hand. Quartz-mining to be carried on systematically not only requires capital, but it also opens up employment for men depending on wages. Labour is quite as essential as capital, for without that, the capital invested in mining ventures becomes valueless and would be entirely lost.

Some of the miners have viewed with alarm the large areas recently applied for, and they complain that the labour covenants have not been complied with in the mines in the Hauraki district, and further state that the granting of large areas of ground in special claims is detrimental to the best interests of the goldfield. This appears to be taking a selfish view of the question. The ground recently applied for has been lying waste for many years, without prospect of it ever being taken up in individual claims. The capital required to work it is beyond the means of the working miner. Then why prevent it being taken up, and capital expended, so as to afford employment to the working miner, and thereby assist in absorbing the surplus labour in the colony. Every encouragement should be given for the introduction of foreign capital, but not to men who merely take up ground with the purpose of holding it until some one comes along to offer them a profit on what had been expended in rent, preliminary expenses, &c. These are the class of men that are detrimental to the interest of the goldfields. They wish to hold the ground, but have no intention of spending money to prospect and open it up; and in many instances they have little or no means, but hold it with the view of levying blackmail on the person or company who wants to hold it for *bonâ fide* mining purposes.

With respect to the complaints made by the Thames miners in reference to the labour covenants in the present holdings being violated, and the granting of large areas being detrimental to the best interests of the goldfields, Mr. George Wilson, the Inspector of Mines at the Thames, sensibly remarks on this subject, when he states "that he does not agree with the opinion expressed with respect to the granting of large areas of ground in special claims. Experience in the Hauraki district shows that in the past, instead of being detrimental, the granting of large areas has had the effect of causing capital to be expended and a large amount being paid in wages to the miners which otherwise could not have been done. The Sylvia, Fame and Fortune, and Crawford's special claim at the Thames, the Coromandel (now the Hauraki) and the Kapanga at Coromandel, the Waihi Gold-mining Company and Silverton Company at Waihi, the Crown and Woodstock Companies at Karangahape, and the Jubilee Special Claim at Waitekauri, were all granted with a view to induce legitimate investment in mining enterprises. The expenditure in most cases has been attended with most successful results, and has been the means of bringing about a condition in mining matters which has attracted the attention of those connected with mining in London and Glasgow, and brought the value of New Zealand mines into prominence as an outlet for the investment of capital. If large areas had not been granted, and the administration not been such as to give encouragement to *bonâ fide* mining enterprises by judicious concessions, the same confidence as now exists would not have been placed in making investments in mining. At the present time, persons with command of capital are seeking to occupy extended areas in old ground, or in ground formerly partially worked by parties with limited capital who had been in a measure unsuccessful for lack of funds. The best interest of the miner and the goldfields would be maintained if extensive operations in working deep levels, driving adits, and in the erection of suitable machinery for pumping water, and for the treatment of low-grade ores hitherto worked at a loss were introduced by wealthy companies."

The policy hitherto pursued by the Warden is to deal with every special claim on its merits. The granting permission to work these claims for a time with fewer men than the regulations provide, and also granting short periods of protection when good reasons are shown, has in the past worked most satisfactorily.

After a mining title is granted, in order that the labour conditions may be complied with, Mr. Wilson states that he sends a notice requiring either the full number of men to be employed or that permission be granted by the Warden to have a fewer number, or he will take steps to have the ground forfeited. The result is that, if the full complement is not employed as required by the regulations, concessions are asked for. When cases of this description come before the Warden each one is duly considered, and if the land is situate on known lines of reefs, and expensive adits or shafts are required, protection is granted in order to give time for the necessary capital to be