

during 1906, 142 : total 153. Applications heard during 1906, 123 ; applications pending on the 31st December, 1905, 30 : total, 153. Of the applications heard, five were objected to, fifteen were withdrawn, eight refused, and one hundred granted. Suits called on during 1906, 15—heard, 10 ; struck out, 2 ; withdrawn, 3 : total, 15. Total revenue received in cash and stamps, £5,021 17s. 8d.

I have, &c.,

W. G. R. KENRICK, Warden.

Mr. Warden ACHESON, Hokitika, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Hokitika, 20th March, 1907.

I have the honour to report as follows concerning gold-mining operations in the Westland Mining District for the year ending 31st December, 1906 :—

KUMARA DISTRICT.

Alluvial Mining.—Thirty-four companies and parties have been engaged mining for gold, and the aggregate area of land held by them amounted to 684 acres 1 rood 11 perches. The returns from many of the claims have been highly payable. The Kumara Long Tunnel Company (Limited), which has carried on sluicing operations since its formation in 1882 at Shamrock Lead, was once again enabled to pay a dividend to its shareholders. Prospecting of the unworked portion of the claim has disclosed that the company may look for many years' profitable work ahead. In the same locality payable returns have been obtained by McGrath and Company and Cullen and party. Operations have proceeded steadily at Cape Terrace, and, although the claims in this locality are few in number owing to the very limited supply of water available, the returns have been good.

Dredging.—The returns obtained from dredging operations in the Greenstone Creek, where four dredges have been working during the year, were not very satisfactory. The expense of working these dredges was greatly increased by the closing of the bridge over the Teremakau River to vehicular traffic about four years ago. A new bridge will shortly be opened, and in consequence dividends may reasonably be looked for next year by those interested in the claims. The Bun Tuck dredge, a previously paying concern, has been laid up owing to the rotten condition of the pontoons. The Three-mile Gold-dredging Company (Limited) went into liquidation, and the dredging plant is now owned by a local syndicate, which has recommenced operations.

Miscellaneous.—The need of systematic prospecting of several large areas in the vicinity of Kumara is keenly felt, and should gold be found to exist in payable quantities, as may be reasonably expected on the north side of the Teremakau River, in the vicinity of Payne's Gully and in the valley of the Kapitea, prosperity would be undoubtedly restored to this one-time flourishing goldfield.

STAFFORD AND GOLDSBOROUGH DISTRICTS.

Alluvial.—On the 31st December, 1906, 444 acres were held under special and extended claim, and 3,250 acres under various licenses, including sawmill and reservation. The returns from the claims have been quite equal to those of previous years. A local gold-buyer informs me that he purchased more gold during last year than for some time past. The claims at Middle Branch Flat and Tunnel Terrace have been working steadily and gave good returns. At Callaghan's several new holdings have been taken up lately, and from this it would appear that those interested are satisfied with the year's results, and look upon the locality as likely to provide profitable mining for some time to come. The Waimea Hydraulic Company's claim at Goldsborough was surrendered, and the company took up a new one at Chapel Terrace. An extensive flume from the Government water-race on Tunnel Terrace to the opposite side of the Waimea Creek is now about constructed, and the manager is sanguine that with a regular supply of water, which is assured, and the quantity of wash available, handsome returns may be looked for in the future. The Wheel of Fortune has been yielding satisfactorily. The owners put in a large drainage-tunnel during the early part of the year, and are now building a new elevator. When the latter is completed the ground will be worked at a lower level than formerly, and more room for tailings will be available. This claim gives employment to a large number of miners. At German Gully and Fourth and Fifth Terraces all the claims were steadily worked when water was available, but the supply was very limited, and the dry summer caused many to be idle for months. Early in the year Pimpernell and party applied to the Department for a subsidy to connect with the Government water-race at Tunnel Terrace, but their application was refused. Sixty-nine mining applications were received, being a decrease of seven on the previous year.

Dredging.—Only one dredge was working in this district—viz., that owned by the Stafford Gold-dredging Company. The company took up a special claim of 16 acres adjoining their present area, and intends shortly to amalgamate it with its present holding.

HOKITIKA.

Alluvial.—The returns were up to the average of recent years. At Rimu, a few weeks before Christmas, some excitement was caused by a report that Fisher and party, sinking behind the township at what was then known as Chow's, but is now called Governor's Terrace, had bottomed on wash at a depth of 130 ft. The wash proved to be 3 ft. in thickness, and was generally considered payable. Water prevented deeper sinking, until the Rimu Miners' Association came to the assistance of the party with a pumping plant, which enabled a sandstone bottom to be reached at a further depth of 10 ft.