

MARLBOROUGH.

No. 3.

REPORT ON WAIRAU GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Warden's Office,

Havelock, 19th April, 1872.

In my report on this gold field in June last I remarked that it would be rash for me to hazard an opinion as to its future; several quartz reefs had been discovered, and very sanguine expectations were indulged in by the public. The Sutherland Gold Mining Company had then just erected machinery to commence crushing.

Since then a considerable quantity of stone has been crushed, but the result has been that the company has discontinued its operations, as the proceeds were not sufficient to pay expenses. Better stone is believed to exist at a different level, as the smaller original tests from that portion of the reef were considered payable.

The reef at Onamatutu has been recently tried, a small battery being erected there by the Marlborough Golden Crown Company, but the result has been very unsatisfactory indeed, *no gold* being obtained after crushing several tons of stone. It is not likely that any further trial will be made here.

Alluvial digging has been nearly abandoned, only a very few men being now at work; the gold has been found in isolated patches, in most uncertain positions, making the profits of the miners more than ordinarily precarious, so that nearly all have left.

Operations at and near Onamatutu have been principally on the hill sides, and the main valley (although believed generally to be gold-bearing) has been almost untouched, the ground being very wet and deep.

One party is just about to commence to try and bottom in one of the tributaries. They will erect a whim, and may by that means succeed where many have tried in the ordinary way and failed.

The future of this district is still very uncertain, neither of the main valleys draining the localities where gold has been found having been tried, being so wet.

W. WHITEHORN, Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields.

No. 4.

REPORT ON PELORUS GOLD FIELD.

SIR,—

Warden's Office,

Havelock, 19th April, 1872.

This field has not very materially altered in its conditions since my report in June last. The population increased considerably during the summer months but has been reduced again to about 110. The average population for the past quarter I estimated at 150.

The gold produced from 1st July, 1871, to March, 31st, 1872, has been about 2000 ounces.

The larger terraces are still untried, and the future of this field seems to depend entirely on whether these can be made payable. A few parties have tried them slightly, and find gold; they are continuing their operations, and should they be moderately successful I think an attempt will be made to bring water on to them by forming a company and availing themselves of Government aid. I have lately been over the country, and, from a cursory view, I believe no engineering difficulty exists of such a nature as to render the work more than ordinarily expensive.

The road is very much improved; a really good pack road exists now up to the Forks, a distance of about thirteen miles from the junction of the Wakamarina with the Pelorus.

The workings are confined to the river and its eastern tributaries; there are streams coming in from the westward, but these have been but very slightly prospected, if at all.

The Wakamarina itself is for the most part worked out; several parties during the summer months have undertaken large workings in it, but were not in most cases adequately rewarded for their trouble, finding that parts of their claims had been worked before.

One terrace only, near the lower part of the river, has been yielding large returns, and from that not less than 100 ounces per man to a party of eight has been taken; it is still yielding well. I do not anticipate any further reduction in the population, as I believe under any circumstances the present number will find remunerative employment for some years, but the terraces, if found payable, would hold a very much larger population.

W. WHITEHORN, Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields.