

At some sixteen miles north of Martin's Bay lie the gold workings at Big Bay. They are accessible from Jamestown either by land or water, and there, during our visit, a considerable number of the settlers were working. From what I could learn they were making good wages. The workings are entirely confined to the beach, and the general opinion appears to be that if the adjacent country was properly prospected, a large extent of it would prove to be payably auriferous. The country in the neighbourhood of Pike's Creek and Lake Alabaster is also spoken of as presenting good indications of auriferous deposits. Judging from the colour of the water of Pike's Creek in flood, the formation of that portion of the country is entirely different from that of the Hollyford Valley. Considering the great natural advantages possessed by the whole district, which, I think, cannot be overrated, I believe that the settlement is destined in a very few years, if it receives a moderate share of attention, to become a thickly populated and very valuable district.

No. 24.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G., to the Right Hon. the Earl of KIMBERLEY.

(No. 16.) Government House, Wellington,
 MY LORD,— New Zealand, 20th February, 1873.

In continuation of my Despatch No. 1, of the 7th January ultimo, I have the honor to report that I left Dunedin on the 10th ultimo, and reached Wellington on the 4th instant, after a rapid journey through a large portion of the Provinces of Otago and Canterbury, during which I visited the Gold Fields of the former Province; its mountain lakes, exceeding in grandeur the lakes of Switzerland and Italy; and the glaciers of Mount Cook,* the Mount Blanc of the Southern Alps. *13,200 feet above sea level.

2. I transmit herewith, in duplicate, copies of the official Maps of Otago and Canterbury. The red show my routes on my late journey, and on those described in several previous Despatches.

3. I was accompanied throughout their respective Provinces by the Superintendents; and I take this opportunity of recording my deep sense of the heartiness and hospitality of my reception everywhere, by the local authorities and by all classes of the community. I annex copies of a few of the numerous addresses of welcome presented to me; all were in the same spirit. Among them will be found copies of two addresses from the Chinese gold diggers. It will be seen (Enclosure No. 6) that "they take this opportunity of declaring their loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, and their appreciation of the happiness which they have experienced during the time they have resided under British rule; and for the consideration and protection afforded them in their various pursuits, by the justice and equity of the laws which here exist, and by the way in which they are administered."

4. The pressing affairs of the North Island had prevented me from visiting the Southern Gold Fields at an earlier period of my administration; and the miners, together with the rest of the population, were aware that I was on the eve of my final departure from New Zealand. In short, I was a man whom they had never seen before, whom they knew they would never see again, and who had enjoyed no opportunity of rendering them any special services; and yet in every district and township I was most cordially greeted, as the Representative of the Queen. Such demonstrations cannot fail to be satisfactory on public grounds; for in these self-governing Colonies the Governor is regarded as the main visible link of union with the Throne, the Mother Country, and the Empire at large, and the marks of respect paid to him are intended as proofs of national loyalty and patriotism.

5. It is of course impossible to give, within the compass of a Despatch, any adequate description of the Gold Fields of this Colony. I would, however, refer to the concise and accurate account contributed by Dr. Hector, F.R.S., to the Transactions of the New Zealand Institute, Vol. II., pages 361-374.* The official returns show that the aggregate value of the gold hitherto exported from New Zealand exceeds in value twenty-six (26) millions sterling; and that the annual production averages between two and three millions sterling.

6. Gold mining has now become a settled industry in this country. The miners have very generally brought their wives and families with them, purchased

* See the Library of the Colonial Office.