

ing any licenses being issued, or applied for, after the second Tuesday in March in each year; and how the wants of 500 or 1,000 men in this matter are to be provided for. The law is sure to be evaded, and I fear that far more drunkenness will arise when spirits are sold surreptitiously, than would be the case under a proper system.

As to the Aorire River diggings, I cannot venture to express an opinion: my experience is too small of them to warrant my saying more than that I believe the few miners employed are doing very well, and that I think the diggings may be extended with the assistance of water-races; but I am not yet in a position to recommend any particular race for your consideration.

Perhaps the greatest mineral wealth of this district is in the form of iron ore, and a Company, called the Parapara Company, is being formed to work a mine of it. As this ore has been tested and proved to produce iron of a very superior quality, and as both coal and limestone are procurable near at hand, we may reasonably hope to see a very prosperous time for Collingwood should this Company be formed; and as iron is sure to be in large demand in this Colony, it ought to prove a remunerative investment.

A. GUINNESS,
I have, &c.,
Warden.

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

WESTPORT.

No. 5.

Mr. Warden GILES to the UNDER SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Westport, 27th April, 1874.

I have the honor to forward herewith a copy of my yearly report to the Nelson Provincial Government upon the state of my district.

I may point out that, in making a report to the Provincial Government, I have touched upon some subjects which are perhaps foreign or unsuitable to the purposes for which you require a report on gold fields matters. The remarks under the headings, "Sale of Lands" and "Licensing Law" are illustrations of this; but I have thought it better to send you a complete copy, as you can easily strike out those portions if you think the report will serve your purpose better without them.

I have, &c.,
JOSEPH GILES,
Warden.

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

To the PROVINCIAL SECRETARY, Nelson.

SIR,—

Westport, 18th April, 1874.

The condition and progress of the district of Buller, including Charleston and Brighton, for the year ended on the 31st March ult., does not furnish much material for a lengthy report.

Population.—In giving a statement of the mining population, we are this year assisted by the results of the recent census, an event which affords us a periodical check on our estimates, which, under other circumstances, are necessarily to a great extent conjectural. The census returns, according to the information I have received on the subject, give the following totals of population for the different parts of the district:—

Westport	...	...	...	...	...	...	873
Neighbourhood of Westport, on north bank of Buller and district to the north, including the northern terraces, as far as the Waimangaroa	...	...	...	...	...	...	356
Mokihinui, Little Wanganui, and the Karamea	...	...	...	...	...	...	82
Up the Buller to a little above the Blackwater	...	...	...	...	...	...	48
From Buller to Nile, including Waite's, Pakihis, and the Sea Beach	...	...	...	...	...	...	551
Charleston, Nile to Four-mile Beach	...	...	...	...	...	...	957
Brighton, Four-mile to Razorback	...	...	...	...	...	...	281
							<hr/> 3,148 <hr/>

Of this total I estimate the mining population as follows:—

North of Buller to Waimangaroa	...	...	...	...	...	...	250
North of Waimangaroa to Karamea	...	...	...	...	...	...	60
Addison's and Waite's, Pakihis	...	...	...	...	...	...	280
Charleston, including Sea Beach to Totara	...	...	...	...	...	...	500
Brighton	...	...	...	...	...	...	121
							<hr/> 1,211 <hr/>

The very slight difference between this and my estimate of last year makes it probable that the latter was rather too low, as there has certainly been some diminution of the mining population during the past year. A few have, I believe, left for the Palmer River diggings since the census was taken, but not enough to make much sensible impression on the above estimate. Whether or not the Palmer gold field turns out to be rich or inviting, there can be no doubt that the opening of any good alluvial gold field within tolerably easy reach, would draw away the greater part of such of the miners of this district as have the means to go. In the present state of the district we are never sure of retaining our mining population; but it is highly probable that we shall be more than compensated, so far as mere numbers go, by an accession of Chinese. These people have been increasing in numbers of late in the Grey Valley, and the appearance of a few here, presumably as pioneers, seems to give us promise of an influx of them to this district, in all parts of which there is ground which will probably be steadily worked by them when its former occupants have gone to more inviting fields.