

Shotover River, lying at the foot of those rich terraces on which are situated the Shotover Company's claim and other holdings of a similar character. The plant and arrangements for working the claim will be, when completed, of the best possible description.

*Quartz Mining.*—There is little new to report as to this industry. The Nugget Company has increased its capital, and the manager contemplates operations of a most extensive and complete character. The old Hercules Quartz Claim has, I believe, been taken up by this company, and I understand that it is intended to include the working of the ground in the contemplated operations of the company. The Phoenix Company's ground and battery have been let on tribute for a term of years, and the tributers are busily engaged in repairing the plant and bringing stone to grass.

*Population.*—The population has slightly decreased in consequence of the Palmer rush, and the progress of public works in other portions of the province.

*Agriculture.*—The total amount of ground held under agricultural lease in the district is 19,111 acres 2 roods 3 perches. The land acquired under deferred payments during the year is 502 acres 2 roods 27 perches. The land directly sold not having been previously held under lease is 1,084 acres. The crops throughout the district have been, during the present season, exceptionally good, both in quantity and quality, the harvest weather having been all that could be desired. It is however impossible to speculate upon the price that will rule for grain, in the absence of any practicable outlet to the coast. The completion of the Winton and Kingston line of railway will enable growers and merchants to calculate with more certainty as to price and general value of produce.

The gold fields revenue collected in the district during the twelve months amounts to £8,882 15s. 10d., inclusive of sums received from the direct purchase of land referred to. Attached are statistics as follow—approximately:—

1. Number of machines employed in alluvial and quartz mining.
2. Table showing, approximately, the number, description, and value of the water-races, tail-races, dams and reservoirs, ground-slucices, &c.
3. Return of the number of mining leases in force, the extent of ground leased, and the rental per annum.
4. Return of the number of agricultural leases in force, the extent of ground leased, and the rental per annum.
5. Return of the number of licenses under "The Gold Mining Districts Act, 1871."
6. Table showing the number of companies registered under "The Mining Companies Limited Liability Act, 1865," and amending Acts; "The Joint Stock Companies Act;" and "The Mining Companies Act, 1872."
7. General return of the mining districts for the year.
8. Table showing the average rate of wages per week.
9. Number of miners employed.
10. Return showing the average price of provisions and live stock.
11. Return of cases in the Warden's Court, and costs awarded.

During the year ending 31st March, 1875, bullion to the amount of 15,207 oz. 1 dwt. 12 grs. was exported from the district, giving a value, at £3 16s. per oz., of £37,986 17s. 7d.

I have, &c.,

RICHMOND BEETHAM,

Warden.

The Under Secretary, Public Works (Gold Fields Branch).

## No. 16.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Arrowtown, 31st March, 1875.

I have the honor to report upon the Arrow District, under my charge for the year ending the 31st March, 1875. Having been absent for nearly nine months, I have been unable to watch closely the progress of the district; my report therefore will not be as full as I would wish.

With reference to the old digging localities, at Cardrona there are about seventy-five European miners, 150 Chinese, and twenty other European adults. At the upper part of the Cardrona Creek there have been for years past about fifty miners employed, and they will have in the same locality work for many years yet. From the township down the creek towards the Wanaka the difficulties of mining increase, owing to the leads being deeper and containing more water. In recognition of these obstacles, special claims, averaging from seven to ten acres each, have been granted to men, who have expended already on each of their claims nearly £2,000. Pumps are continually kept going on all the claims that are being worked below the township.

At Branch Creek, six miles below the Cardrona, being a mining gully of eight years' standing, there are about twenty miners, who having large water rights are doing very well. These men evidently anticipate permanent employment, as they have built comfortable houses, and fenced in gardens for themselves. I have no doubt there would be a greater population in this place, if more water could be brought to bear upon the auriferous ground.

At Macetown there are about fifty Europeans and fifty Chinese engaged in mining, the method being both by tunnelling, sluicing, and diversion of the Arrow River. There are some rich tunnelling claims between Macetown and Eight-Mile, some of the parties making as much as from £8 to £10 per week per man. The Government during the past year has spent some considerable sums of money in cutting tracks between Macetown and other mining localities. These outlets have been of immense advantage to the storekeepers, and have given increased facilities for prospecting in the outer gullies during the summer months. I attribute the discovery of two valuable quartz reefs, in the mountain ranges between Macetown and the head of the Shotover River, very much to the opening up of the country at the expense of the Government.