

The Parapara Coal and Iron Mining Company have for some time ceased to work their coal mine, and on the cessation of this part of their works a number of men were thrown out of employment, causing much distress and dissatisfaction. The company are preparing for the erection of their furnaces, but are making but little progress at present. The partial failure of this company's speculations has had a somewhat bad effect; but they are in possession of immense mineral resources, and may yet succeed in developing them.

I may also mention that a private individual has commenced the manufacture of bricks from the immense deposits of a kind of half-decomposed limestone, and these bricks are reported by experts to be of a very superior quality. At present it is premature to say whether the experiment will prove a financial success; if it should, brickmaking will be one of the most important industries of this district, as the raw material is practically unlimited, and of easy access.

In conclusion, I may state that the district contains large auriferous deposits, which have as yet scarcely been touched. Gold has been found in many places where, for want of roads, the labour of getting up provisions is so great that the miners cannot profitably occupy these places. Much good agricultural land, too, lies unoccupied for the same reason. In fact, during the past year no attempts have been made in this part of the district to assist in the settlement of it. In the Takaka Valley some improvements have been made. A new wharf has been erected at the Waitapu, which, with the improved roads and bridges, will help those who have invested a considerable capital in saw-mills in the valley. I must call your attention to the very inefficient state of the police here. There are only two men employed, called district constables, who are both totally inexperienced with police duties, and who, from the low pay they get (£60 per annum), seem to consider that their only duties are to serve summonses or other processes of the Court. I have called the attention of the Provincial Government to this matter, but no notice has been taken of it. I therefore wish to place on record my opinion that an alteration of the present force is absolutely necessary. I may state that complaints of rowdiness in some of the outlying places have been made to me; but the present police are useless for the prevention of such conduct. Sly grog-selling is also notoriously carried on in many places, which more efficient police officers would at all events help to repress.

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

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

RETURN of Yield of Gold, Miners' Rights, Business Licenses, &c.; also Criminal and Civil Cases, and Fees and Fines in the Resident Magistrates' Courts.

Approximate yield of Gold	...	...	...	...	1,100 oz.
Miners' Rights issued, at £3	...	...	...	...	1
Applications for Registered Rights	...	...	...	...	202
Number of Criminal Cases	...	...	...	...	32
" " Civil Cases	...	...	...	...	53
Fees and fines	...	...	...	...	£64 14 5
Fees, &c., paid to Provincial Account	...	...	...	...	£321 14 2

No. 15.

Mr. Warden LOWTHER BROAD to the UNDER SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Nelson, 13th April, 1876.

I have not been able to fill up the numerous returns required by your office, because the mining population under my charge is sparsely scattered over a considerable tract of country, and as regards quartz workings none of the companies at Wangapeka have done any work at all during the past twelve months.

At the Baton, small parties of miners continue to make a living from the alluvial workings; and at the Sherry River the sluicing parties are earning, as they have been for some years past, decent wages.

River workings in the Wangapeka District continue to attract and support a limited number of miners, who appear to be able to earn something more than the bare cost of living.

There has been a growing feeling for some time past that the quartz reefs in this district, which created so much stir five or six years ago have not been fully and fairly tested. There is plenty of crushing power on the ground, and there is a prospect of a fresh effort being made ere long to prove the value of the Wangapeka reefs.

Scattered about the Sherry, Wangapeka, and Baton Districts, all of which are under my charge, there are about 150 miners all engaged in alluvial workings, and making enough to maintain them in comparative comfort.

I have, &c.,
LOWTHER BROAD,
Warden.

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.