

With respect to the general prospects of gold-mining in this part of Westland, whilst there is no striking change to report, the attached memorandum of the export of gold from Hokitika, from the beginning of the year 1877 to the 31st March last, will show that what change there has been is on the side of improvement. Perhaps the incessant wet weather which for so long a period exercised a most injurious influence upon the general welfare of the West Coast may have afforded this small compensation, by enabling the miners to keep more steadily at work.

Gold exported from Hokitika during the Years 1877 and 1878, and Gold Duty thereon.

				Gold Exported.			Duty.		
				Oz.	dwt.	gr.	£	s.	d.
1877	...	...	...	53,405	5	6	5,340	8	7
1878	...	...	...	60,766	15	19	6,076	14	4

For the Twelve Months ending 31st March, 1878 and 1879, respectively.

				Oz.	dwt.	gr.	£	s.	d.
1877-78	...	...	...	56,192	4	7	5,619	4	6
1878-79	...	...	...	59,218	11	0	5,921	17	1

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

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

P.S.—From a report received from Mr. Macfarlane, at Jackson's Bay, since the above was written, I subjoin the following extracts, giving some account of the present prospects of gold-mining in the southern part of Westland:—

“The men working in this district are earning fair wages; and only for the difficulty of access to the back country, and the very high price of provisions, contingent upon the absence of pack-tracks or roads, a large mining population would be settled in this district. This applies more especially to what is known as the Paringa Block, lying between the Haast and Paringa Rivers; this block, extending along the coast for a distance of thirty miles, is known to be rich not only in gold, but in many other minerals. The diggers, who are at present working about two miles from the shore-line, report having found much better gold further inland; but from the nature of the country it is quite impossible to get provisions and tools put on the ground without a track of some kind. The quantity and kind of gold—coarse nugget gold, with quartz specimens—obtained by the few miners who have been working here for years, give indications of an extensive auriferous country at the back. The Hokitika and Haast Pass track will cut through this block some eight miles from the sea, giving access to a large area of hitherto unexplored country. * * * * The unfinished portion of the track known as the Paringa Track should be pushed on at once, not only that through communication may be established between the East and West Coasts, but on account of the great probability of an extensive gold field being opened. * * * * With the projected roads finished, thereby giving facilities to men to obtain supplies, we may reasonably anticipate a large accession to our population during the ensuing summer.”

J.G.

No. 11.

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

SIR,— Warden's Office, Kumara, 2nd June, 1879.

In forwarding the usual statistical return and report for the District of Kumara for the year ended 31st March, 1879, I have the honor to remark as follows:—

The sittings of the Courts have been regularly held weekly throughout the year, and the business transacted may be summarized thus:—

Resident Magistrate's Court.—Criminal cases, 172; committed for trial, 5; civil cases, 627; amount sued for, £4,811 1s. 1d.; amount recovered, £2,627 12s. 5½d.

Warden's Court.—In this Court 44 cases were tried, exclusive of objections disposed of, the business being about equivalent to that of the preceding year.

The total revenue, exclusive of gold duty, amounted to £3,313 0s. 6d., and was composed of the following items:—

				£	s.	d.
Publicans' licenses and applications	...	...	...	1,590	19	0
Revenue collected by Receiver of Gold Revenue	...	...	...	1,211	9	6
Resident Magistrate's Court fees and fines	...	...	...	510	12	0
Total	...	...	...	£3,313	0	6

Registrations.—Of these, 281 have been issued during the year, the transfers numbering 124; 84 rights were renewed.

General Remarks.—Although the population has diminished, I am glad to be able to say that the yield of gold, estimated at 37,000 oz., shows a considerable increase for the year, thus indicating increased prosperity for those who remain. During the month of June last the Mignonnette Lead was discovered and opened up, and supported about twenty-five of what may be termed paying claims, but many of these have since been worked out. I am not aware that any other new ground worthy of note has been opened up during the year.

The Government water-race has proved a great boon to the district, the average quantity of water sold weekly being 90 heads, and the revenue derived from this source was £2,829.