

those obtained for the Waihemo land. With a not distant prospect of a railway communication by the Strath Taieri line, as well as the Waihemo branch, the prospects of settlement are becoming more and more encouraging, and there is every probability that the next block of land to be opened on the Maniototo Plain (on Chapman's run) will be readily taken up by a good class of settlers, especially if most of the sections are to be let on agricultural leases. Other lands in the district are shortly to be opened for application, and will doubtless be largely taken up. In fact, with the prospect of railway communication, it is probable that the demand for land may be found to continue to increase instead of being satisfied by the opening of comparatively small blocks here and there about the country.

6. The revenue for the past year has been as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Gold revenue, including mining-lease rents... ..	1,036	7	10
Miscellaneous, including premiums on agricultural leases	2,018	17	6
Warden's Court fees and fines	36	15	6
Agricultural-lease rents	3,052	5	6
Deferred-payment rents	5,018	1	2
Cash received on account of Mount Ida Water-race, for nine months —namely, from 1st April to 31st December, 1878, after which date the race became vested in the Mount Ida Water-race Trust	1,128	2	10
Total	£12,290	10	4

7. Upon comparing the above statement with that of last year it will be seen that the revenue is nearly doubled, and I may remark that the revenue of that year was nearly twice that of its predecessor. This increase of revenue is mainly due to the opening of lands for settlement.

8. Of the lands held under agricultural leases there have been sold to the lessees during the year 4,534 acres, which were yielding a gross annual rent of £577 2s. 6d. This much of the revenue is therefore lost to the department, and the same will happen again as the time arrives for the right of purchase to accrue in respect of other lands similarly situated.

9. I forward herewith the usual statistical returns.

I have, &c.,
H. W. ROBINSON,
Warden.

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

No. 13.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Arrow, 1st April, 1879.

I have the honor to forward herewith the statistical returns of the Wakatipu District, and to add a general report for the year ending the 31st March, 1879.

My preface will be somewhat doleful, but borne out by the Press reports that have appeared from time to time during the last six months—namely, that this district, in common with all others south of Cook Strait, will have to suffer a recovery for several years from the disastrous effects of unprecedented storms and floods—in fact, continuous bad weather—from the 9th of May, 1878, to the beginning of February, 1879, causing an estimated damage to public property amounting to £12,000; to private property, as far as I can ascertain, about £10,000; to loss of live stock, £20,000. The destruction of arable and depasturing ground and crops is more particularly detailed under its proper heading; but the consequent distress so much to be feared early in this year has been considerably stayed, the Government having promptly come to the rescue with loans to repair damages and rebridge rivers; followed by a sudden burst of prosperity during the last month at our quartz reefs—the proofs of a great and permanent future in this direction—aided by the new settlement of about four thousand acres, just opened on the Crown Terrace (of which six selections have taken up an area of 1,093 acres), and the daily communication from the southern cities and coast by rail and steamers with the interior.

QUARTZ-REEFING.

Macetown Reefs.—I stated in my last report that there was very little doubt of the permanency of the Macetown reefs; but during the past year, owing to adverse and unforeseen circumstances, their progress has not been such as I naturally expected. However, their daily development gives sound proof of their value, and evident lasting nature. The unprecedented floods of last September did incalculable damage to this part of the district. All the roads and most of the water-races, constructed at so much expense and labour, were almost virtually wiped out; but great energy has been displayed by the various mining companies and the County Council, so that communication and transit is being rapidly restored, the roads being now constructed so as to resist, in all human probability, any future floods of whatever magnitude.

The Macetown public crushing battery, erected by a company of principally local shareholders, has supplied a great want, and is proving a valuable adjunct to the prosperity of the place. The plant consists of ten 6-cwt. stampers, driven by one of Greenlaw's turbines, with all the latest appliances in the way of amalgamation and gold-saving apparatus. It is under good and experienced management, and should meet with that public support such a meritorious and spirited undertaking deserves. Eighty tons of quartz from the Gladstone Mine were crushed at this mill last season, yielding 304 oz. of retorted gold; and 50 tons from the Tipperary Company, giving 127 oz. These were not picked lots, but comprised all the stone then raised in each mine; therefore they may be taken as a fair test of their future yield and value. Winter then closed in, and crushing operations were of course suspended. The floods inopportunately happened, and, the roads being destroyed, no stone could be carted to the mill until January of this year. The Tipperary Company then commenced sending down 600 tons of quartz, which have been crushed, yielding 835 oz., or nearly 1 oz. 8 dwt. per ton, and the company intend to keep the mill fully employed until winter vetoes further operations.