

APPENDIX.

AUCKLAND GOLD FIELDS.

No. 1.

Mr. Warden KENRICK to the UNDER-SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Coromandel, 22nd May, 1881.

During the past year the discovery of some rich leaders at the Tiki, some five miles south of Coromandel Township, has led to a revival of mining throughout the district. These leaders were first discovered at the head of the Matawai and Pukewhau Creeks, at the Tiki, on private land belonging to a Mrs. McIntosh, from whom leases of various-sized blocks were obtained. The County Council started to make a good pack-track on to the ground at once. This, with the assistance of a grant in aid from the vote for gold fields roads, has been formed into a very fair road, one that has rendered accessible a large extent of new ground. As yet not very much has been done towards proving the permanency of these leaders. Still, the work that has been done, and the yields from the stuff taken out and crushed, warrant the hope that this district will in the immediate future come to the front as a good gold-producer. At present the most important claims are Tiernan's, Heenan's, Blackmore's, and others, situated on the block of private land, some 564 acres in extent, before referred to. The block is known as "Moore's Grant," and is now owned by Mrs. McIntosh, formerly the widow of William Moore, who many years ago obtained the block of land from the Native owners. The land is not within a gold field, nor subject to gold-fields laws or regulations. It may be a question whether some provision should not be made for the regulation and inspection of gold mines on private lands; for, if left without control, miners are apt to become careless and neglectful of the needful precautions in underground workings. On the Government land adjoining this block many claims have been marked out, and in some cases licenses have been applied for; but, as it will take some time to prove these holdings, the returns and discoveries have, up to the present time, been confined to those claims taken up on private property.

The quantity of quartz crushed during the year is much less than during the preceding year, though the yield of gold is nearly equal, being 720 tons and 4,976 ounces for the year 1880–81, as against 1,296 tons and 5,190 ounces for 1879–80. The difference in yield is somewhat remarkable, in 1879–80 being slightly over 4oz. to the ton, whilst in 1880–81 it was close upon 7oz. to the ton. These figures are furnished by the Mining Registrar.

The Kapanga, owned and worked by English capitalists, are still going down with their main shaft. The manager is hopeful of shortly having something good to report.

The heavy work undertaken by the Tokatea and Bismarck Companies of putting in a tunnel on the Kennedy's Bay side of the range, at the No. 7 level, has at last met with success, having reached the Bismarck ground, leaving some 300 feet further to drive before reaching the Tokatea. It was early found that hand labour in such extremely hard ground would be too slow; the company therefore obtained rock-drills and machinery from San Francisco, with which they have succeeded in driving the level through the hard belt of country, reaching the lode-channel in the early part of March. The result, so far, has justified both the outlay and the anticipations formed of the result, golden stone having been at once met with in the Bismarck ground. Great hopes are entertained of the payable character of the large block both companies will have in hand when this important work is finished. The level, when completed, will be about 3,000 feet in length, giving to both companies about 200 feet of backs, and following the main lode for about 1,500 feet. The pluck and energy displayed in carrying on such a large undertaking deserves success.

The Union Beach Mine has not met with much success during the last year. It would appear as though all the known payable leaders in the mine have been nearly worked out down to the 180-feet level, but there is every reason to believe that, if the shaft begun two years ago had been gone on with, that these leaders, found so rich in the upper workings, would be found to have carried their rich deposits to the lower level.

The New Golden Pah has made a new start during the past year, and, with its splendid plant, should soon be able to prove the value of the ground. A few pieces of rich stone have been met with, and the prospects of the mine appear good.

Several leases have been applied for on the Whangapoua side of the range, on property owned by Mr. Harris, good prospects being found there. The terms on which this land is offered by the proprietor to miners, though not so good as those on which Government land can be obtained, are fair, and should induce prospecting. This may be said to be an almost entirely new district that is now being opened up between Castle Rock and the ranges to the East Coast. Should payable gold be found the find will be of considerable importance from the large extent of unexplored country in the vicinity.

In conclusion, I may safely say that the prospects of this northern portion of the Hauraki District have not been so bright for years past. The appearance of the town is—for Coromandel—brisk in the extreme. The empty houses, so long an eyesore in the place, are now nearly all occupied by people attracted by the finds at the Tiki and other parts of the field.

During the year there have been in the Resident Magistrate's Court 172 civil and 54 criminal cases heard. In the Warden's Court 24 cases have been disposed of; 6 licensed holdings have been