

very small. In my last report I mentioned four small companies who were about starting or had started work in this district. Only one of these companies (the sluicing party at the Forks) can be reported as having done well. The Wakamarina Alluvial Hydraulic Sluicing Company appear to have devoted their time, energy, and spare capital to law, the result doubtless proving eminently unsatisfactory as far as the shareholders are concerned. A short while ago, having a little spare time at their disposal, they washed up, and I am informed the washing up was satisfactory. I think, with proper management, the working of this claim would pay. I refer briefly to a matter that properly should appear in next year's report. There is no doubt that the dividing ranges between the Wakamarina, the Kaituna, and the Wairau Valleys, are gold-bearing country. Reefs have been discovered in many places, and in one or two places the surface reefs have been tested. No great amount of work has been done, and very little capital has been expended on this work; it may be described as very little more than surface work. Every one appears to have been waiting with the most exemplary patience for something to turn up. Some two or three weeks ago it was reported that payable stone had been struck near Deep Creek. A party of men have held a prospecting area for a short time near Dead Horse Creek, and it appears they have found a reef some 10 or 12 feet thick, of what at present appears to be good payable quartz. Several leases have been applied for, and, should the stone prove good, machinery will at once be brought on the ground. I hope, therefore, to be able to present a much better report of this district for next year.

Wairau Valley District.—There is very little to report concerning this district. I have no doubt parties at work are earning wages, or they would not remain on the ground. This district is for the most part cut off from the centres of population by the Wairau River, and want of roads. A very good road, opening up the whole of this gold field, might be made down the north bank of the Wairau, but conflicting interests will for the present prevent this useful and necessary work being done. The largest number of men are I believe at present working in Onamalutu Valley, many of them by agreement on freehold land. It is reported that a good reef has been discovered near Arm Chair Creek.

Queen Charlotte Mining District.—There are only two companies at work at present in this district, the Ravenscliff and the Golden Eagle. Both I believe have been honestly and perseveringly carrying on their works, but with extremely poor results. The Golden Eagle Company have, during the past year, crushed only about 20 tons of stone, with a result of about 10 oz. of retorted gold. The manager informs me that he has about 20 tons more of stone brought to grass ready for crushing. The Ravenscliff annual report is forwarded herewith, and to which I beg to refer you for further particulars.

I have, &c.,

J. ALLEN,
Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields.

NELSON GOLD FIELDS.

No. 6.

MR. WARDEN CURTIS to the UNDER-SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Nelson, 20th April, 1882.

I have the honor to forward to you herewith the various forms with which you furnished me filled up with the required information relative to the Wangapeka Gold Field.

I have only held the office of Warden for about three months, but I may say that, not only during that period but throughout the year ending 31st March, nothing worthy of remark has occurred in the district under my charge. Several applications have, however, lately been made for gold-mining leases at the source of the Owen River in consequence of the reported existence there of a payable quartz reef; but I am not as yet in possession of information sufficiently reliable to justify me in expressing an opinion as to the value of the discovery.

I have, &c.,

OSWALD CURTIS,
Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

No. 7.

MR. WARDEN GIBBS to the UNDER-SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Collingwood, 18th March, 1882.

In compliance with the request contained in your circular of the 20th ultimo, I have the honor to forward, together with the returns required, a general report of the present position and prospects of the Collingwood Gold Field. There are some of the returns less complete than I could wish, there having been no regular register kept. I am therefore only able to give an approximate return by going through the butts of old certificates and other books. This will be for the future altered, as a regular register of all transactions will be kept.

Notwithstanding that my connection with this district for so many years gives me a fair general knowledge of the various mining localities, I have, since taking charge early in January last, thought it advisable to pay a few visits to some of the principal places, and I find that, although there is not just now much gold being obtained, there is a singular appearance of activity in the way of preparations for the future.

The country known as the Goulard Downs, which my predecessor referred to in his report of last year "as favourably thought of by the miners," and recommending the continuation of the road up the Aorere Valley and on to these downs; this work not having been done, this large block of country is still practically closed to the miner from the impossibility of getting provisions conveyed there at any reasonable cost. This road, for which Parliament last year voted the money, would also open up a large extent of rough pastoral country, and gold has been found in nearly every creek in this large