

## No. 14.

Mr. WARDEN BIRD to the UNDER-SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Okarito, 4th April, 1882.

I have the honor to forward herewith the statistical returns respecting this district, for the year ending 31st March, 1882, as requested by your circular of the 20th February. Little or no alteration has taken place during the past twelve months, no new finds of any importance having been reported. A fine sample of gold has been got in the Omocona Creek, south of the Waiho River; and I believe the new road from Lake Mapourika to Gillespie's Beach, which is now being surveyed, will open up a large area of auriferous country, which up to the present time has not been prospected.

I have, &amp;c.,

FRANK BIRD,  
Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

## OTAGO GOLD FIELDS.

## No. 15.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Clyde, 30th May, 1882.

I have the honor to report the following particulars respecting the progress and condition of mining matters in the district under my charge, which at present consists of those known formerly as the Wakatipu, the Dunstan, and the Mount Ida Districts. I only assumed charge of the latter in December last.

## THE DUNSTAN DIVISION.

In the neighbourhood of Clyde, my head quarters, little or no change has taken place, as the very few mining privileges applied for will show.

The sluicing claims up the Waikerikeri are still engaged in profitable work; and, on either bank of the Molyneux, the old miners, the owners of all the available water, are obtaining results which appear satisfactory to them; but for a long time no strangers (except perhaps amongst the Chinese) appear to be attracted to the locality. The miners are mostly the survivors of the first rush here, in 1862-3, and have settled down in small holdings on the river bank, and are satisfied with small yields; and for their purpose there is yet untouched a large area of ground available for their water, and no doubt will keep them similarly employed for some time to come. So strong is their belief in this direction that they strenuously oppose any application of any of their number who attempts to obtain a title to his homestead under the 66th section of the Mines Act.

*Alexandra.*—Two steam dredges have been constructed, at a cost of about £13,000, to work the bed of the River Clutha, in the vicinity of this town, and between it and Clyde. There has always been a strong, and I believe well-founded belief, that rich deposits of gold are to be found in the bed of this river and in the upper crevices or pockets of the rocks, of which in a great measure the bottom consists. One of these dredges, however, after repeated trials, had to be laid up, the immense depth of silt or tailings and the rapid under current proving an obstacle too formidable for successful operations; the other persevered until lately, and several improvements were added to its gold-saving apparatus, but up to the present it has not been a success. The alluvial mining is still carried on with the past success, and the yield of gold compares favourably with last year. The majority of those engaged are Chinese. The quartz-mining venture in Conroy's Gully has hitherto been a failure; an attempt was made to float a company for the purpose of working the mine, but the fact of the local miners taking so little interest in it damped the ardour of the Dunedin public, and the affair languished. A very fair antimony lode has been discovered on the west bank, near this place, and a lease obtained. The matter is young, and no work of importance done.

*Black's, Tinker's, and Drybread.*—At Black's No. 3 a party has been formed to work a special claim obtained for a portion of this locality, which was formerly worked with astonishing results. It is known as the Deep Lead, and, as its name would imply, is worked by shafts; the preliminary works, as will be readily understood, are tedious and liable to disappointment in a neighbourhood destitute of timber and the ground treacherous, composed of drift, requiring strong timbers and skilful miners. The old party gave up overcome with these difficulties, but the present occupiers appear in earnest, and though unfortunate enough to lose a shaft or two have at length tested the ground with most satisfactory results. They are now engaged in washing up, and I believe will receive full encouragement to prosecute their work with vigour in the coming season (the Spring.) They have to bring their timber from Tapanui, and I believe the cost during the winter would be too great. They have received protection for some portion of their ground. The result of their operations is watched with keen interest by the Black's miners. At Tinker's the premier claim, the Blue Duck, now owned by the Mountain Race Company, is engaged in an important work—a new and very deep tail-race. Both at this place and Drybread mining operations have steadily prospered, and results appear satisfactory.

*Roxburgh.*—Here on the river there are four current wheel dredges in operation, all of which are paying their owners handsomely. The alluvial claims on the river banks and at Waikaia and Pomahaka are still worked, and employ about the same number as last year. A quartz reef has been taken up near the head of the Fraser River, upon the Obelisk Range, and crushing plant has just been placed there, but no returns as yet to hand. The prospects were good enough to warrant the trouble and expense of bringing machinery such a distance and such an altitude.