

large stones and pass them to a conveying belt, which will deposit them clear of the workings. The company's workings will soon, at their present rate of progress, reach a part of the old gully where richer returns cannot fail to be obtained both from the top tailings, through being nearer the discharge of the old Blue Spur sluices, and also from the bottom having been earlier covered up, and thus prevented from being re-worked. I shall watch with great interest the future development of these important works, the success of which cannot fail to influence largely the future workings of a large area of similar ground both in Otago and other parts of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

J. NUGENT WOOD,  
Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields.

### No. 17.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Dunedin, 26th April, 1882.

I have the honor to forward herewith the annual statistical information relative to the state and condition of the Hindon Mining District for the twelve months ending 31st March, 1882. In doing so, I regret my inability to report that the progress of the district as regards the mining industry has been as satisfactory as might have been expected from my last report, or that there is much reason for believing that the prospects for the next twelve months are to any great extent more hopeful. Having last year explained somewhat fully the circumstances of this gold field, the following remarks as to its present condition are all that are now necessary :—

*Alluvial Mining.*—From 60 to 70 men have been working the alluvial deposits with varying success, averaging, it is said, about £2 10s. per week per man. Many do not work at their claims continuously. Some combine rabbiting with digging; others leave for harvesting, and return when the harvest is over. As stated in previous reports, the alluvial workings of Hindon would be much more productive and afford profitable occupation for a much larger number of miners if a sufficient water supply for sluicing purposes could be obtained. How to obtain such a supply appears to be a somewhat difficult problem, not alone from want of capital, but owing in a great measure to the depression of the streams that would be the source of supply and the altitude to which it would have to be brought.

*Quartz Mining.*—In this branch of mining industry operations have been almost at a standstill. With the exception of some 50 or 60 tons, chiefly test crushings by the Just-in-Time Company, no quartz has been crushed during the past twelve months. Nearly the whole of the companies, including the one just mentioned, have ceased working, and seven leases have been cancelled during the year for non-payment of rent. The stone crushed by the Just-in-Time Company yielded 10 dwt. to the ton; but this was not sufficient to pay working expenses. In the Zealandia Company's lease the reef, which is throughout more or less auriferous, has been traced from the surface to a considerable depth, and efforts made to discover what particular portion of the ground will best pay for working. There is hope that this company will be successful. In the lease known as the Gladstone, Harrison and Marriott have a well-defined reef, which bids fair to turn out payably auriferous. The lessees are now having 100 tons of stone taken out for a trial crushing. The Hindon Company have merely put through their battery one or two trial crushings of stone from a newly-discovered reef at the Serpentine in the Mount Ida Mining District. Beyond this, I cannot say that anything has been done during the twelve months in the direction of developing the quartz mines of Hindon.

*Settlement.*—Agricultural settlement is steadily progressing. A considerable area of land has been cropped with fair average results. A few additional sections have been taken up, and inquiry having been made respecting a number of others that were temporarily reserved for mining, it has been decided that several of them shall now be advertised for sale. The total population remains about the same—viz., 200; for, although the number of miners, as will be seen from the tables, is rather less, the number of settlers and others has slightly increased.

I have, &c.,

J. P. MAITLAND,  
Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

### No. 18.

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

SIR,—

Oamaru, 31st March, 1882.

I have the honor to report as follows upon the portion of the gold field under my charge as Warden :—

In December last I ceased to be Warden of the Mount Ida Gold Fields District, but on my removal to this place I retained jurisdiction over the portions known as Macrae's, Hyde, Hamilton, Serpentine, and Maerewhenua. It is with reference to these portions only that I have now to report.

There is but little of interest to note with respect to Macrae's, where a small number of miners are regularly employed, principally in working over old ground.

*Hyde.*—In the neighbourhood of Hyde mining has of late been giving way to agriculture as the chief occupation of the inhabitants. The last important work—an attempt at turning the Taieri River—was, unfortunately, by no means a profitable speculation for those concerned, and at present there is no new enterprise on foot.

*Hamilton.*—There has been more interest in mining affairs. A number of new claims have been taken up, and the large companies continue to work in a very systematic way, and with fair success. To work their ground they have to put in long and expensive tunnels through the rock; one of these now near completion was begun about five years ago. The workings at Sowburn, about five miles from Hamilton, continue to support a quiet but thriving community, who have for the most part been settled for many years in the same spot. The workings are alluvial.