

Tawa is essentially a North Island tree. It only appears in the Middle Island in the Pelorus district. It is a small tree, furnishing soft, even-grained timber, suitable for joiner- and cooper-work.

#### MINERALS.

There is no district in New Zealand that contains anything like so much mineral wealth as the one traversed by the proposed East and West Coast and Nelson Railway. The land has some value, present and prospective, even to those who think least of it; and the forests are admitted on all sides to be exceedingly valuable: but the minerals are of far greater importance than land and forest together. From Nelson all down the West Coast to Otago there is scarcely twenty miles in which minerals of some economic value have not been discovered. In many cases the discoveries are little more than indications; but it is fair to assume therefrom that workable deposits are likely to be met with sooner or later. The great drawback in following up these discoveries is the difficulty of prospecting the mineral country, which is generally very rough and covered with dense wet bush. On the other hand, what are now hindrances will ultimately become aids to mining. The rough country covered with bush and teeming with water furnishes two of the greatest desiderata—timber and water-power. Up till now the only minerals known to exist in workable quantities are gold, coal, iron, copper, and antimony.

#### GOLD.

*Location and Extent of Mining.*—The very existence of the West Coast as a field for settlement of any kind is due entirely to the presence of gold. The accompanying Map No. 4 shows that auriferous ground is widely dispersed all over the country affected by the proposed railways, and, as already stated, gold-digging and -mining is equally well diffused. It must not, however, be assumed that payable gold-fields on a large scale exist wherever the yellow colour appears on the map. It is impossible to classify the auriferous country; and, although gold is still found in all the places shown, the richer ground in many of the larger diggings has long since been worked out.

With the exception of the larger sluicing claims at Ross, Humphrey's, and Kumara, nearly all the alluvial digging is carried on by private parties of miners working their own claims.

Regarded as a basis of speculation at which fortunes are made in a day quartz-reefing on the West Coast has seen better days, but viewed as a steady industry it is now on a more satisfactory footing than ever it was. Reckless speculation has ceased, and a large number of men are engaged in legitimate mining, getting fair returns. There are at present seven dividend-paying claims at Reefton, Boatman's, Lyell, and Mokihinui.

The machinery at some of the larger mines, both alluvial and quartz, is of the most improved description, and the works are carried on in a scientific and business-like manner; but in many cases the appliances are imperfect, so the best results are not obtained.

The best way of showing the location and extent of gold-mining in the districts affected by the proposed railways is to give the returns of miners and mining machinery. The following are the figures as regards the West Coast for the year just ended:—

*Number of Miners employed during the Year ending 31st March, 1886.*

Locality.	Alluvial Miners.		Quartz-miners.		Totals.		Grand Totals.
	European.	Chinese.	European.	Chinese.	European.	Chinese.	
Inangahua .. .. .	116	240	300	..	416	240	656
Ahaura .. .. .	350	233	..	..	350	233	583
Charleston .. .. .	220	..	..	..	220	..	220
Westport .. .. .	157	5	45	..	202	5	207
Lyell .. .. .	50	30	130	..	180	30	210
Murchison .. .. .	120	8	20	..	140	8	148
Waimea and Stafford .. .. .	375	205	..	..	375	205	580
Totara .. .. .	329	81	6	..	335	81	416
Hokitika and Kanieri .. .. .	476	124	..	..	476	124	600
Kumara .. .. .	400	25	..	..	400	25	425
Greymouth .. .. .	322	268	..	..	322	268	590
Arnold .. .. .	450	95	..	..	450	95	545
Greenstone .. .. .	100	50	..	..	100	50	150
Okarito .. .. .	65	..	..	..	65	..	65
Totals .. .. .	3,530	1,364	501	..	4,031	1,364	5,395