

## No. 3.

Mr. Warden ALLEN to the UNDER-SECRETARY FOR MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Blenheim, 6th April, 1897.

I have the honour to forward you herewith my annual returns for the goldfields under my charge.

I have nothing new to report to you concerning the districts under my charge. Those holding special claims and licensed holdings, as a rule, are apparently simply holding them for sale, no work having been done.

Many of the miners have left Cullen's Creek for Auckland and other districts, and unless some company takes up the flat with the intention of working it I see very little probability of any improvement in this district at present.

If miners and prospectors are not driven off the land by leasing and sale of known rich auriferous country, I have no hesitation in saying that the future prospects of the mining industry in Marlborough are extremely good.

I have, &amp;c.,

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

J. ALLEN, Warden.

## No. 4.

Mr. Warden HEAPS to the UNDER-SECRETARY FOR MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Nelson, 5th June, 1897.

I have the honour to forward herewith the annual returns for each of the subdistricts of that portion of the Karamea Mining District within my jurisdiction—viz., Nelson, Motueka, Takaka, and Collingwood—and to report generally thereon:—

## NELSON.

There has been considerable stir in mining circles during the past year, and a considerable amount of prospecting has been done; but of actual mining done, and gold won, there is as yet nothing special to report. This subdistrict includes the Sherry, the Wangapeka, and the Baton.

## MOTUEKA.

A considerable number of applications for special claims, licensed holdings, and mineral licenses have come before the Court during the past year, but of these only one—a licensed holding of 30 acres—has been finally dealt with. It is intended to work this claim, which consists of alluvial ground, by hydraulic sluicing, the water being brought from Lake Peel. The special claims applied for embrace an area of 700 acres, but have not yet been surveyed. The mineral licenses are to work deposits of asbestos, which are reported to be extensive and of superior quality; but here, again, progress has been delayed on account of the difficulty experienced in getting surveys made. The claims referred to above are all in the neighbourhood of the Mount Arthur table-land, which district I reported upon in detail under date 28th January last. A few miners have been at work on the Leslie River and about the Karamea Bend. I am gratified to find that since I reported as above quoted the track leading to the Mount Arthur table-land is being improved.

## TAKAKA.

There has been a good deal of inquiry for mining properties during the year, but the returns show that not more than fifty miners have been at work, and no marked success has attended their efforts; wages, however, up to £3 per week have been earned.

## COLLINGWOOD.

It is gratifying to be able to report unmistakable progress in this part of my district. There is evidence that not long hence this will become a busy mining centre and the home of other allied industries.

Since the 1st April, 1896, sixteen special claims or licensed holdings have been issued. This is the largest number ever issued here in any one year, and, in fact, beats the number ever held before at any one time. On the 31st March, 1896, the number held was eleven; on the 31st March, 1897, the number was twenty-seven. The licensees of most of the holdings recently granted are apparently very much in earnest about developing the properties they have acquired, and a deal of preliminary work has been done and money spent, leading up to larger and more active operations in the near future. Among these I may mention Messrs. Fell and Gilmer's properties at the Quartz Ranges and the Golden Gully, which is to be known as the "Collingwood Goldfields Company (Limited)"; also, John Tyler's holding at Coles's Creek, where a very promising reef is being opened up.

The Rocky River Hydraulic Sluicing Company have also commenced preliminary work; and it seems very probable that their plant will be laid and sluicing commenced before the end of the present year.

The Parapara Hydraulic Sluicing and Mining Company are working steadily at their claim, and it is generally believed with satisfactory results, but as they are at present sluicing on private property, I am unable to give the actual result, which you will notice is left blank in the return of registered mining claims, the company not having furnished the information.

A small decrease in the number of miners' rights issued has taken place during the year, and also in the number of mining applications made, the numbers being: Miners' rights—Collingwood, 134; Takaka, 50. Applications—Collingwood, 167. This is easily accounted for by the large number of miners required at Taitapu, West Wanganui, where at the present time fully a hundred are constantly employed in opening up the Taitapu Gold Estates Company's properties, on which a great amount of capital is being expended.