

end of March to properly test the ground. Some of the experts who have paid short visits to the district speak in favourable terms of the north-bank country as a good reefing country. There is very little doubt that the country from Kaituna to Mount Patriarch, possibly to Tophouse, is auriferous, but, like other mining districts, we are at present overburdened with the syndicate formation.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
J. ALLEN, Warden.

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

SIR,—

Nelson, 29th May, 1901.

I have the honour to forward herewith, duly filled up for the localities under my charge, the annual mining returns, and to report generally on the mining industries in my portion of the Karamea district.

COLLINGWOOD.

The signs of a revival of the mining industry, mentioned in my last report, continue in this locality, and are not confined to one class of mining only. Gold-mining is pursued by hydraulic sluicing as at Parapara and the Quartz Ranges; underground mining as most successfully carried on at the Golden Blocks Mine on the Taitapu Estate; and, although actual dredging for gold has not commenced, active steps are being taken for making an early start on the Aorere River and tributaries, and also on the Parapara Mud-flat and vicinity. Three dredges, it is stated, will be at work in a short time. Alluvial mining still attracts the independent individual and small parties of miners.

The confidence manifested by investors in this district does not appear to be the result of any sudden boom or excitement, but to have come about as the result of long and careful inquiry, inspection and prospecting, by practical men of sound mining and business knowledge. Over 800 acres were granted in special claims during the official year, and during the same period fourteen prospecting licenses were granted for an aggregate of 933 acres. Of the five registered and sometime established companies, the Golden Blocks (Taitapu) is pronouncedly successful, and, I am informed, has averaged 300 oz. per month; and the returns from the other mines are described as satisfactory, but actual results are not made public. For some time back suitable labour has been scarce on the field.

Coal-mining.

In addition to the 239 acres held and worked under coal-mining leases, 700 acres were granted during the first three months of the year, and applications are now in for 1,300 acres more. About thirty men are at present employed on this industry, but it is in the hands of syndicates having the command of both English and colonial capital, and, it would appear, with the disposition to operate actively.

TAKAKA.

During the year twenty applications for mining privileges have been applied for, eighteen granted, one refused, and one withdrawn.

At the Anatoki, Jackson's claim has not been worked for some time owing to the illness of the proprietor.

A syndicate of Takaka men has taken up a claim at Sheepy Flat, and has had men working, bringing up a tail-race from the river. The work is very difficult and slow owing to large boulders being met with which necessitates blasting. Continued floods have also interfered with the work, and it is rumoured that work will have to be stopped until next spring.

At the Bubu, Whelham has sold his freehold to a strong Wellington syndicate, who have already sent over a manager. Since his arrival two prospecting licenses for 100 acres each have been taken up, and a water-race which is to bring in fifty heads of water from the Anatoki River has been applied for to thoroughly prospect these areas.

Malone and party are still working on their claim at the Bubu trying to get on to solid ground. I am informed that at present they are getting only poor returns.

Patterson and Thompson are working on the left-hand branch of the Bubu, in the bed of the creek, for small returns.

None of the dredging claims granted on the Takaka and Anatoki Rivers are being worked, or seem likely to be. At the junction of the Takaka and Waitoi Rivers two men are working, who have to swag their supplies from Upper Takaka, a two-days journey. Men undertaking such hardships in a very rough country must, or ought to be, making good wages.

MOTUEKA.

Five prospecting licenses on the Tadmor, Rolling, and Wangapeka Rivers have been granted, and at the Table-land, Mount Arthur, two water-races, two drainage areas, two tail-races, three ordinary alluvial claims, and one special claim for 30 acres have been granted.

The matter of proclaiming the Motueka River a sludge-channel is still in abeyance pending the report of the Rivers Commission. Meanwhile a number of applications for prospecting areas are hung up.

WANGAPEKA.

Notwithstanding that a great deal has been said about the immediate start to be made in this river, I am informed that there is no sign of any material for dredge-building being carted on to the ground, but further prospecting by boring is being done. No mining has yet been commenced on the Wangapeka Run.