

Mr. Warden McENNIS, Naseby, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Naseby, 24th March, 1908.

I have the honour to inform you that no new ground has been opened up for mining operations, and nothing has transpired in mining matters worthy of being brought to your notice. I have no special remarks to make on mining in the Mount Ida District during the year.

I have, &c.,

J. McENNIS, Warden.

Mr. Warden KENRICK, Lawrence, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Lawrence, 10th April, 1908.

I have the honour to forward herewith my annual report for the several subdivisions of the mining district under my charge for the year ended the 31st December, 1907:—

WETHERSTONE AND BLUESPUR.

In Wetherstone three claims are still working—viz., The Golden Rise Mining Party, the Golden Crescent Sluicing Company (Limited), and the Happy Valley Sluicing Company, but the dry season has greatly retarded the work, and nothing like full time has been worked.

The manager (Mr. J. Howard Jackson) of the Bluespur and Gabriel's Gully Consolidated Gold Company (Limited) has kindly supplied me with the following details of the year's work at the Consolidated Mine at the Bluespur: Average number of men employed, 28; quantity of cement treated, 131,656 cubic yards; gold won, 921 oz.; cost of winning gold, £3 16s. 4d. per ounce; amount paid in wages, £2,681 5s. 5d.; amount paid for explosives, £117 2s. 10d.; amount paid for upkeep of races, £638. To illustrate the calamitous effect of the past two years' drought, the manager has supplied figures which show a diminished water-supply, owing entirely to the drought, of 2,498 sluicing-hours as compared to previous years.

In Munro's Gully the following claims are still being worked—viz., J. Kitto and party, P. P. Thomas and party, and E. Browne and party. The latter party have just completed the construction of a large storage-dam at the head of the Tuapeka Bush, on Lambing Flat, which will be a great benefit in dry seasons.

TUAPEKA FLAT.

The only claim in actual work in this locality is the Tamaiti Gold-mining Company (Limited), but a dam and three claims have been granted lower down, and the parties are endeavouring to form companies, so as to work the ground under the same system as the Tamaiti Company.

WAITAHUNA DISTRICT.

A new venture has been started in this locality by Mr. Frank Whelan, mine-manager, of Waitahuna, and a company formed to carry on hydraulic sluicing under the style of "The Havelock Sluicing Company (Limited)." Several special claims have been taken over from Mr. Whelan, also the right for a water-race from the Waitahuna River for fifteen heads of water. The construction of the race is now being carried on by the company, the estimated cost being about £3,000.

Dredging has now ceased in this locality, the claims being worked out; and mining operations are confined to sluicing, the principal claims being as follows: The Waitahuna Sluicing Company (Limited), the Sailors' Gully Mining Company (Limited), William Thomson and party, Joseph Ferris, and Quilter and party.

GORE AND SURROUNDING DISTRICTS.

The mining operations carried on in this subdistrict are entirely confined to dredging, and during the year thirty-one dredges in all have been at work. The principal locality is Waikaka, where twenty dredges have been operating. This field is a very busy one, and good results are obtained by many of the dredges. The ground being worked is in nearly every instance freehold land. The other localities where dredges are working are as follows: Charlton, six dredges; Mataura River, two dredges; and Waimumu, three dredges.

WAIKAIA.

The mining industry in this subdistrict is still in a very healthy and prosperous condition. During the year eighteen dredges have been at work, some of them getting excellent returns. Two new dredges are being built, and will be ready to start operations shortly, in ground that has already been prospecting.

The sluicing claims did not have a very prosperous year, on account of the shortage of water, caused by the continuous drought throughout the district.

The Muddy Terrace Sluicing Company have shown very great enterprise, and have gone to considerable expense in constructing a large water-race from East Dome Creek to carry forty heads of water to work the Muddy Terraces.

It is estimated on good authority that about 60,000 pounds' worth of gold has been won in this subdistrict during the year.

The Nokomai Hydraulic Sluicing Company (Limited) (at the Nokomai) has two hydraulic plants at work, and the returns are said to be very satisfactory.