

forgotten district. A few weeks ago, says the 'Nelson Mail,' a nice little parcel of gold, consisting of 200oz was brought into town, being the result of six weeks working by a party of three men, who have dropped upon a run of gold that they think is likely to afford them profitable occupation for some time to come. Just now, when it is a matter of moment to us to prove that we have in the interior a country abounding in auriferous wealth, a fact such as this cannot be made too public.

Writing of the Upper Buller, a correspondent of the 'Grey River Argus' says:—The banks and beaches of the Upper Buller and its tributaries are all more or less auriferous (in fact, you can find the "color" anywhere), and, with better appliances than those now in use, should support a population numbering thousands instead of the few hundreds now employed. Those who are at work up these rivers do not complain, and, as a rule, are known to be doing very well—such a thing, at all events, as from £3 to £6 per week regularly.

THE NEW GOLD FIELDS BILL.

(From the 'Arrow Observer'.)

THE Executive of the Otago Miners' Association have forwarded the following suggestions to the Gold Fields Committee of the House of Representatives for their consideration, with a view to their incorporation in the proposed consolidated Gold Fields Bill:—

INTERPRETATION.

The word "claim" should also include water race, as is ruled by both District Court and Supreme Court.

The words "water race" or "race" should be defined as head race, tail race for sluicing and gold saving purposes, and drainage tail race. For each of these divisions special application forms and certificates of registration should be provided.

Application forms should contain questions as to exact locality, length, &c., of existing neighboring rights, on holders of which a copy of the application form should be served.

Warden should have power to add questions in writing to those in printed forms.

WATER RIGHTS.

These rights are beyond doubt the most valuable of mining properties, and therefore require special protection. Miners, though they may object to increased taxation, do not complain of a reasonable charge for water, say 5s per head. The charge of £1 for each certificate is an unfair charge, and will beyond doubt retard mining operations. Many rights now in existence scarcely furnish their owners with more than one or two heads, while there are numerous parties who have water sources registered which yield them less than one head, and even this quantity but for a limited period. On these parties a universal charge would press heavily, and for this reason it is objectionable.

With regard to the two heads of water which are reserved to run down a creek if required, we would suggest that the prior right to one head of water be vested in the Crown, and when wanted and taken away from licensed water rights holders the Government should compensate them.

Under this head some provision should also be made for water supply for towns. The money thus invested could not fail to pay a fair percentage and contribute to a very great extent to the health of the inhabitants.

The right of any water should be granted for any period not exceeding 15 years, and it should be left to the option of the applicant to pay in advance the fees for any number of years not exceeding fifteen.

A clause should also be inserted under this head, making it compulsory for drivers of cattle and sheep to give the owners of the water races notice of their intention to drive cattle or sheep across their race, in such places where there exist no bridges.

TAILINGS.

This subject is one of the greatest importance to the mining community, and should therefore be dealt with by the Act. Under the present system, all mining operations are conducted illegally, and may be either interfered with, or stopped altogether. It is one of those subjects that give rise to endless litigation. We would recommend the Government to settle this vexing question in a definite matter.

Parties intending to stack tailings must apply for site. If more than one acre is required, the application must be advertised in three consecutive issues of a newspaper circulating in the district. The Warden of any district to have power to deal with objections.

We would also recommend that all rivers in the Colony should be declared main tailraces, for the purpose of carrying off the debris from mining claims; but restrictions should be provided regulating the size, etc., of tailings, in accordance with the power of the stream; and no stones or other obstructions should be allowed to be deposited in the bed of any river which would obstruct the flow of any river.

PROSPECTING.

The Warden of any gold-mining district should have power to grant prospecting claims.

SPECIAL CLAIMS.

We wish to call the attention of the Gold Fields Committee to the fact, that this wise provision will come into more frequent requisition as labor and machinery are reduced in price, and access to the various gold fields made easy by tracks, facilitating the transportation of timber and other cumbersome mining appliances.

The prosperity of the mining industry of New Zealand depends on the large tracts of auriferous deposits, which being surrounded with great physical difficulties, have hitherto defeated the efforts of the unassisted miner.

The development of these deposits requires capital, as well as labor; but the capitalist requires security, and this is furnished him by the provisions of this clause.

As miners we take this opportunity to express our astonishment that the benefits of this provision are not more generally recognised. We may here also state that we entirely endorse the proposed alteration made in the Gold Mining Lease Regulation of the new Act, but would suggest that only £1 per acre be charged instead of £2 10s.

QUARTZ REEFS.

Quartz reefing, which may be said to be only in its infancy, should also be provided for in the new Act. We beg to quote from the Report of the Miners' Conference at Tuapeka, 1872, the following:—

"In the case of quartz reefs or lodes, the right should be given to the holder to follow such veins in all their dips, variations, and angles to any depth, although they may enter the land adjoining."

LOCAL LEGISLATION.

We again avail ourselves of the Report of the Miners' Conference, 1872:—

"The opinion of this Conference is that the miners are the best judges themselves of the rules and regulations by which they should be bound in the prosecution of their avocation, and they would ask the Government to appoint a Board of miners for the Province of Otago, to be elected by the miners from certain districts, which may be either defined by the miners or by order of the Governor in Council. That the Governor appoint from among the elected body a chairman. That power be given to the said Board to make rules and regulations in conformity with the Gold Fields Act, which, on receiving the sanction and approval of the Governor in Council, may become the rules and regulations under any particular district or province of the gold fields. The mode of election, the time for which members should be elected, and the defining of the districts, may be safely left in the hands of the Government."

We would further recommend, that the members be paid at a fixed rate by the Government.

We believe that by the establishment of paid Mining Boards (one for every Province which contains gold fields), a vast amount of money would be saved to the country, and better legislation provided for the miner.

PRIORITY OF RIGHT.

Priority of right is a rule which has long been recognised as a fair and just one on the gold fields, and is the basis of all mining law.

It is almost indispensable, and if introduced in the new Act would simplify mining legislation to a great extent. We beg again to refer to Report of Miners' Conference, 1872.

MINING OF PRIVATE PROPERTY.

The time has arrived that the attention of the Government should be called to this subject. We are aware that it is out of your province to deal definitely with the matter, but having put ourselves in communication with you, we could not close without bringing this subject under your notice and soliciting your co-operation, should a measure of this kind be introduced in the Assembly.

On behalf of Otago Miners' Association.

JOHN A. MILLER, President.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE AMERICAN UNION.

We clip the following from the Lebanon 'Advertiser':—"Rev. Joseph O'Connor, of Reading, Pa., delivered a lecture on this subject, on Wednesday evening, in the Catholic church of this place, to a very large and appreciative audience. He referred to the New England style in which all our school-books are written, the fulsome praise bestowed upon the passengers of the May Flower, Plymouth Rock, and the general glorification of puritanism, to the exclusion of all other classes; while the discovery of this country, and the troubles, anxiety and sacrifices attending that momentous era in our history, and the heroism of Christopher Columbus, a Catholic, in undertaking the hazardous enterprise, were dismissed with a mere recital of the facts; and the Catholic Church which had instigated, promoted and carried out this project to a successful termination, received not one meritorious word. The difficulties encountered by the early settlers, the establishment of Missions by the Catholics, and the gradual development of the country were graphically sketched. The active and substantial aid rendered by Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, a Catholic, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and others of the same faith, and Washington's letter acknowledging the prominent part taken by Catholics during the war of the Revolution, and in the establishment of the United States Government were next dwelt upon. He paid his respects to 'Harper's Weekly,' that phenomenon of the newspaper world, by saying that no respectable man would take such a paper; that its offensive caricatures and reckless assertions, particularly one during the war, to the effect that now the Catholic Church would seize the opportunity to stab the Union in the back, were contradicted by the noble position and conduct of Catholic citizens on questions affecting the stability of the Government, and should place that sheet beyond the pale of recognized journalism. The late war has abundantly testified to the active friendship of the Catholic Church, as proved by assistance supplied in treasure, in blood, for the maintenance and perpetuity of Liberty and Union. The universal dominion of the Church was illustrated, by instances of Union and Rebel soldiers meeting and forgetting the animosities of war and relieving each other's wants, succoring the wounded and the dying, and the unostentatious work of the Priesthood and Sisters of Charity. The false impression prevailing among Protestants about the worship of images; the Confessional and the power of the Priest were spoken of. The silk stocking churches with their cushioned seats, purchased pews, and exclusion of all but well dressed people, from hearing the word of God, were handled without gloves. He pointed with pride and satisfaction to the large number of poor people who were in daily attendance upon, and took part in the Catholic religious services. After commenting upon the corruptions existing in the country in public places, he believed that the influence of the Catholic Church alone could prevent it, because of the strict accountability to which every good Catholic was held. The divorce system; the absence of Christ in the pulpit and the substitution of political preaching; the spread of debasing doctrines and literature, were in turn touched upon; and the lecturer concluded with a beautiful and stirring appeal for the Catholic Church.