

Comparative state-
ment of population.

57. It will be observed that there has been an increase to the population of Otago since the 1st August 1861 of nearly 50,000 souls, of whom 37,943 are male adults, and 6,998 female adults. Four-fifths of the total number or 40,275 persons of both sexes arrived from Australia; 5,537 from Britain and the remainder coastwise. The stream of immigration has been gradual, and steadily progressive; and the Province has thus escaped that utter dislocation of society which characterized the early gold discoveries of Australia. The largest influx in any one month occurred in March 1863, when 14,168 persons landed at Dunedin, and the greatest efflux took place in March 1862 when 5,136 persons quitted the Province. For the winter quarter of 1863 the additions to our population numbered only 1,262, of whom 1,102 are adult males. This is to be accounted for by the movements of Australian miners of whom 239 left Dunedin in excess of arrivals from the Australian Colonies. But there has been nothing approximating to the reactionary rush which ensued in 1852 when our mining population was absolutely scared out of the country by exaggerated reports of the severity of the winter season. The existence of large belts of timber on the Wakatipu field, and the discovery of extensive beds of lignite elsewhere, has done much to abate groundless fears on this score; and, moreover, the winter is now known to be most favourable to the pursuit of some descriptions of gold-mining. The foregoing tables elucidate the fact that in 1861-2 out of 24,243 men who arrived from Australia, 16,386 or three-fourths of that number returned thither; whilst in 1862-3, 31,762 men arrived from those colonies and only 7,303 or less than one-fourth returned. As our miners are principally old Australians this fact satisfactorily demonstrates the growing stability and value of the Otago Gold-fields.

Present population.

58. The present population of Otago may be estimated at about 65,000 souls. It appears from returns furnished by the Wardens and Mining Surveyors that there are 21,000 persons residing within the limits of the proclaimed Gold-fields. To this number must be added 3,000 who are located in various gullies beyond those boundaries, making a total of 24,000. It is computed that two-thirds of the whole or 16,000 are actually engaged in mining operations, the balance consisting of persons engaged in business and professional pursuits and of women and children. The average number of miners for the entire year may be set down at 14,000, and their average earnings at £164 per head. In making this calculation however, it must be borne in mind that gold by its very nature offers unusual facilities for evading the revenue and it is therefore not improbable that in spite of all precautions a higher estimate would be correct.

Effect of the gold
discoveries.

59. The result of the gold discoveries has been to place Otago in the foremost rank amongst the Provinces of New Zealand. Since the commencement of 1861, her population has been quintupled, her resources incalculably enlarged; and her commerce has suddenly attained a magnitude, such as under the slow growth of ordinary colonization could scarcely have been anticipated for many decades. The Imports have increased seven fold, the Exports twenty fold, and the Customs revenue ten fold, as is evidenced by the subjoined table, compiled from returns supplied by the Collector of Customs, Charles Logie, Esq.

	Imports.	Exports.	Customs Revenue.		
	£	£	£	s.	d.
Year ending 30th June, 1861	339,637	124,972	32,981	7	3
Year ending 30th June, 1862	1,752,766	1,899,180	132,623	7	3
Year ending 30th June, 1863	2,472,097	2,104,109	214,406	0	0

The Provincial Revenue has sustained a corresponding increase, advancing from £62,764, the amount received for the year ending 30th June, 1861, to £239,651, for the corresponding period of 1862, and to £306,733 in 1863.

Advantages accruing
from the gold disco-
veries.

60. Other material advantages have attended these discoveries. Only fifteen years have elapsed since the first settlers—the Pilgrim Fathers of Otago—landed at the Heads, and laid the foundations of the Province; but Dunedin has already assumed the dimensions of a city, and the agricultural villages are rapidly becoming important inland towns. Large townships have sprung up on the gold-fields, and only await the opening and sale of the lands to become the centres of thickly settled districts. In the distant wilderness, where only three years since an enterprising settler laboriously paddled his lonely raft along the shores of an unexplored lake—the large and important township of Queenstown has been established, and the solitary homestead of Mr. Rees is now the abode of a busy and energetic population. Although only seven month old, Queens-town already consists of several streets closely lined with numerous stores and hotels, with concert-rooms and a theatre for the votaries of pleasure, and with churches for the service of the Deity. It has a public Treasury for the safe custody of gold and the receipt of revenue, and a Court-house with its attendant functionaries, for the administration of justice. Jetties and Wharves are built out into the lake for the safe landing of passengers and merchandise; and three steamers, a schooner, and a small fleet of boats and cutters ply upon its waters. At Frankton—five miles distant—a large and commodious hospital has been erected; and at Dunstan and Tuapeka are other