

Tinker's.—A new race heading from tributaries of the Chatto Creek, with a right to eight heads of water, is being brought into this field. The length of cutting will be fifteen miles, and the work is so far in progress that it is expected to be completed in six months from this. The water right now belonging to this race was formerly diverted to Black's, but the proprietors, thinking it could be more profitably employed at Tinker's, applied for and obtained the necessary authority to construct a new race. The land here is noted for yielding very large returns. A quantity of stout india-rubber hose or piping has been lately imported here from California to be used for hydraulic mining, but it is questionable whether iron piping is not the most economical and effective material to employ. It is, however, far in advance of canvas hose which is very expensive considering the short time it lasts, and that it is frequently getting out of repair when heavy pressure is required.

Agriculture.—Four blocks of land have been opened in this district for leasing under the Agricultural Lease Regulations, and 1,866 acres have been leased, nearly the whole of which is under cultivation and improvement. There are also a few hundred acres cultivated upon the neighbouring runs. The principal crop grown is oats for horse feed, and potatoes are also grown, but not sufficient for local consumption. The district is very backward in agricultural matters, for sufficient produce is not even raised for home use, although much of the land is very superior, and far better than that in adjoining districts, which would be good markets for a surplus. There is no flour mill within seventy miles of Black's, but a joint stock company is now being formed to supply this great want, and I anticipate that so soon as a mill be once started, that there will be an increased demand for land, and a great impetus will be given to agricultural settlement.

Gold.—The quantity of gold forwarded by escort during the year is as follows:—

	Oz.
Black's	9,450
St. Bathans	4,515
In all	13,965

In conclusion, I beg to state that I consider the future prospects of this district as very encouraging. In spite of the unusual shortness of water which has so long prevailed, the miners have done more than hold their own, the existence of almost unlimited areas of auriferous land is more fully confirmed. Improvement in the system and economy of mining is being discovered and adopted, and several reproductive works will be shortly completed. With a return of seasons of average rainfall, it is reasonable to anticipate considerable prosperity.

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
E. H. CAREW, Warden.

No. 18.

Mr. Warden SIMPSON to the UNDER SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Clyde, 25th April, 1873.

I have the honor to forward, in compliance with your circulars of the 12th February and 11th March, the statistical returns of the Dunstan District for the year ended 31st March, 1873.

From the district, which now only comprehends the sub-districts of Cromwell, Clyde, and Alexandra, there was escorted, during the year, 35,451 oz. of gold, being 3000 oz. in excess of what was escorted from those sub-districts the previous year, a favourable sign when it is observed that the population has diminished.

The great drawback to the further development of this district, particularly of the alluvial workings, is the small water supply, which has during the last four months been reduced to a minimum. Efforts are being made to allay this evil in the Cromwell District by the construction of the Carrick Water Race, in the Clyde District by that of the Chatto Creek, and in the Alexandra District by that of the Gorge Race, at a total expenditure of not less than £20,000. All those races will open up new ground of proved auriferous character, to the extent of some hundreds of acres. But those races, even taken as they are from what may be considered good sources of supply, would, by a season such as that we have just gone through, be much affected. Such ever-recurring dry seasons, in a district like the Dunstan, should cause attention to be turned to the procuring, by mechanical means, a supply of water from the large rivers. Short, however, as the water supply has been, the alluvial workings have contributed the great proportion of the gold; and of those workings, those at a high elevation, such as the Nevis, have yielded the most. In particular, the yield at the Nevis has been greater than for several years.

Quartz Reefing.—During the year great efforts have been made to develop the reefs in this district, but in most cases with indifferent success. Those in the Alexandra District, known as Butcher's and Conroy's, of which much was expected, have been abandoned. Indifferent management and too small capital may be assigned as the reasons; for the general opinion is, that those reefs, although not rich, are payable, and will be taken up again. Of the Bendigo reefs only three are now worked—the Lucknow, Aurora, and the Bendigo Company. But for the last three months little or nothing has been done for want of water supply. The difficulty in adopting any other power for crushing is the inconvenience of fuel; but I think that in the case of the Bendigo Company, where the gold-bearing quality is so well ascertained, it would pay to adopt steam. This Company have just recently come on stone quite as rich looking as any they have ever taken out. On the Carrick a great deal of work has been done, which has revealed that the reefs there, so far, are merely fragments of reefs, tossed about in all sorts of positions, by some unknown agency. In consequence, prospecting is a most difficult task. Some miners are of opinion that the main reefs will be found in the locality, while others hold that there are no indications to justify that conclusion, but offer no explanation of how the fragments got to their present location. The following may be put down as the payable reefs