

Warden's Court.—Number of cases, 71; amount sued for £327.

Resident Magistrate's Court.—Number of cases, civil, 451; number of cases, criminal, 129—total, 580; amount sued for, £3,477 ls. 11½d.

Licenses.—The following number of rights, licenses, registrations, and leases have been issued or applied for and forwarded for consideration:—Miners' rights at £1, 544; business licenses at £5, 45; business licenses at £3, 100; business licenses at £2, 35; registration at 5s., 194; registration at 1s., 394; leases (mining) representing 20 acres 1 rood 4 perches; extended claims 40, representing 74 acres; retail licenses (publicans'), 33; conditional licenses (publicans'), 13; wholesale licenses, 1; bottle licenses, 2.

The above statistics give evidence of the failing prosperity of the district. Nothing, however, in my opinion, is needed to restore it to its prosperous state of former years, but a large and cheap water supply. This the proposed Mikonui Race would provide. This work, if done at all, must be by Government, as the inhabitants of the district have not now the means of doing it themselves. Their faith in the gold-bearing character of the ground is evidenced by the extensive as well as expensive underground workings and steam-engines in which all their capital has been sunk. These are now lying idle and useless for the want of that which they cannot procure—water. The claims of the district have been so strongly urged by petitions and otherwise, to have this race constructed, that it is needless for me to urge the matter any further, save in my official capacity to give it a strong recommendation.

I have, &c.,

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

G. G. FITZGERALD, Warden.

No. 12.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Okarito, 1st May, 1873.

With reference to your circular memorandum dated 12th February last, I have the honor to submit the following report upon the district under my charge:—During the past year the population has somewhat decreased, a few people having gone to the reefs near the Grey, and to the Australasian Colonies; whilst nothing fresh has been struck in the district sufficiently attractive to induce an influx of miners. The population numbers about 485, distributed as follows:—

	Males.	Females.	Children.	Total.
Okarito	19	14	29	62
North Beach	6	2	10	18
Whataroa River	32	...	...	32
Saltwater Beach	22	3	3	28
Three Mile Beach	10	2	8	20
Five Mile Beach	70	25	33	128
Waiho River	14	...	...	14
Lake	3	...	...	3
Oamarukina	9	...	...	9
Waikupakupa River	3	...	...	3
Moonlight Beach	5	1	3	9
Gillespie's Beach	60	16	14	90
Cook's River	12	1	1	14
Karangarua	8	1	...	9
Hunt's Beach	20	3	6	29
Bruce Bay	5	...	...	5
Painga	4	...	...	4
Southward Bay	8	...	...	8
Total	310	68	107	485

The above numbers include about 230 miners, the remaining males being engaged as miners, farming, storekeeping, &c.

The gold reports during the year ending 31st ultimo amounted to 2,960 oz.; whilst there was forwarded overland 2,511 oz., giving a gross product of 5,471 oz. This gives an average of 11·28 oz. per head (485) of population; of 17·64 oz. per male (310); and of 23·78 oz. per miner (230). In the previous year the average per head was 15·6 oz.; per male adult, 23·13; and per miner, 28·84 oz.

I am inclined to believe that a question as to the price of gold has led some of the miners to retain a considerable quantity in their hands, only meanwhile selling as much as may be necessary to pay their expenses.

Although for the past year there appears a lower average of gold than in the former year, the miners have, I believe, been doing better, the expense of getting it having been much less. The working of large claims under heavy expenses was generally brought to a close in the former year; and although the yield of gold was large, a few miners only had good net returns, and a great number of the men were in debt, and some of them remained so even at the closing of the claims. Since then the men working in small parties of three or four have had a better choice of ground, and with small expenses can make a few pounds, whilst, at the same time, there has not been the reason for obtaining credit from the storekeepers which existed when working large claims with expensive appliances, so that business transactions are now on a far more satisfactory basis than formerly, as well to the miners as to the business men. Most of the miners who choose can save money, and, with their affairs on a ready-money basis, are, I believe, more likely to prosper than formerly, when nearly all large parties ran into debt to start an extensive claim, which was expected to give a handsome return in the result, but which, from one cause or another, perhaps scarcely gave small wages, the miners' expenditure meanwhile being based upon the handsome return it was expected to yield. That the miners have some money, is, I think,