

a good position to avail themselves of any advantages their very commendable perseverance may afford them.

The workings of the Gabriel's Gully Quartz Mining Company, Registered, are also situate upon this spur. Since November, 1872, the Company have crushed 4,000 tons of quartz, the produce of their mine, which has yielded gold to the value of £4,025, a poor result, certainly, but it speaks well for the management that this could be effected without loss. The manager is now having the low level prospected from the tunnel of the Clarke's Hill Prospecting Company. The importance of any discovery of payable quartz at this depth (300 feet) could not be too highly estimated, as affecting not only the Company but the whole district.

The Table Hill Quartz Mining Company, Registered, and the Bruce Quartz Mining Company, Limited, at the Canada Reef, Table Hill, have not yet succeeded in making their respective ventures profitable. The Table Hill Company was for some time worked upon tribute, but operations at this claim have ceased for some months past, but will, I should imagine, be resumed when labour is more easily obtained. The Bruce Company have sunk to a new level, and are now driving; but I am not informed with what prospects before them. Their pumps and battery are driven by a turbine.

On the line of reef, and adjoining the claims formerly held by the O.P.Q. Company, Registered, several shafts have been put down on the reef, and quartz of very promising appearance brought to light. In one shaft in particular the reef is well defined, from two to three feet in thickness, widening out as it deepens, and the stone shows a considerable quantity of gold, which will no doubt give a good return at the mill. The occupiers of this ground also hold the old rights of the O.P.Q. Company. The water-rights of the Golden Point Company from the Waipori River have also devolved to them, and I understand they intend constructing a race to work a battery of stamps upon the claim. A large quantity of gold was obtained by the O.P.Q. Company when working in a costly manner and at considerable disadvantage in many respects; but I have seldom seen a reef so favourably situated for economical working as the new discoveries I have named. To the south of this ground Thompson and party have acquired a lease of ten acres, and they have also water-rights, which they are cutting on to their machine site. Their claim has been prospected by opening out along the cap of the reef for a considerable distance, and the result of a small crushing has been 2 ounces per ton.

These are about all the efforts at present being made in the district to develop quartz reefs; and although considerable when viewed in the light of individual undertakings, are exceedingly small, on the whole, when compared with the extent of the district and the average amount of effort usually required to open out a single payable reef. I may safely say that in the Australian Colonies there are many reefs, each of which has absorbed more labour and capital in prospecting before producing a single ounce of gold, than has been expended upon all the reefs in this district. I have great hope that when labour becomes more abundant, that much more attention will be given to this branch of mining, and that it will become, as it has elsewhere, the mainstay of the district.

In alluvial mining the Blue Spur still maintains pre-eminence, and no rival to it has yet appeared. Difficulties are, however, gradually drawing upon those claim-holders who discharge tailings into Gabriel's Gully. This gully is rapidly choking up, and so large is the accumulation from the tail-races from the Blue Spur, that where the first township stood, it is estimated the surface is now covered to a height of sixty feet. Several of the claims cannot be worked much longer to advantage, unless some provision be made for reducing and keeping down this accumulation in the gully. There are no engineering difficulties in the way of this being done, although the cost of the extensive works which are required would be considerable. A very general opinion prevails among men competent to judge, that not only can the gully be cleared, but that sufficient gold could be obtained in the operation to leave a handsome profit over the cost of the work. This is a matter which must at no distant day command attention. That great wealth lies hidden in the spur below the present working level is undoubted, and that thousands of tons of tailings in the gully contain gold is at any time capable of being demonstrated. It is also equally certain that without a properly-formed channel this ground can never be worked to any advantage, and a more legitimate undertaking for support, under the provisions of the Public Works Act for works upon gold fields, could not be presented to the Government.

At Waipori a few alluvial claims are being worked with very good returns, but the number of miners engaged there is very small. The drainage channel, which is being constructed by the Government, absorbs nearly all the available labour, the contractors for the work meeting with no little difficulty in procuring men at the highest current rate of wages. It is anticipated that the completion of this channel will open out an extensive area of country known to be all more or less auriferous, but without more population it may as well remain uncompleted.

There is nothing special to remark upon concerning the other sub-divisions, but I can state generally that throughout the whole district every man able to work can command good wages, and that employers of all descriptions of labour have difficulty in supplying their wants; and I may add that the necessaries of life, as one of the enclosed returns will show, are obtainable at very reasonable rates.

The gold fields revenue collected for the year was £5,330 7s. 6d.; fees and fines in the Magistrate's Court, £304 17s.; and in addition to these sums, a considerable amount as Provincial revenue.

The number of cases heard in the Warden's Court was 46, and 288 applications were disposed of; and in the Resident Magistrate's Court, 422 cases were decided within the same period.

The total population of the district is now 4,816.

I have, &c.,

E. H. CAREW,

Warden.

The Under Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.