

be fairly tested or machinery erected, as the country is exceedingly mountainous and very broken. The County Council have voted a sum of money to form a track thereto. There are three batteries in the district, but only two at regular work. To one of the latter—that of the Alpine Company—an addition of five heads of stampers is being made, which, when completed, will tend to increase the future return of gold. Alluvial mining is in active operation on the north bank of the Buller River, between the Lyell and Hampden—in some places on the low ground between the road and river, and in others on the high terraces above the road when water can be made available for ground-sluicing. The south bank of this river, between the Lyell and the Maruia, together with the large tributaries running into it, are known to be equally auriferous, but are almost unoccupied for want of suitable tracks and appliances to work the ground. Parties of miners are also scattered over the low flats and terraces adjoining the Upper Buller, Matakītaki, and other rivers in the same locality, many of whom hold large areas of ground, and have brought in large water-races for ground-sluicing, and are otherwise carrying on extensive operations in connection with their claims. The Manuka Flat, an extensive area situate above the Lyell Township, is known to be auriferous, and would give occupation to several hundred miners if the ground was once opened out; but the heavy expense required for that purpose has deterred men from entering upon the undertaking unless some special bonus or inducement was guaranteed to the prospectors. The revenue of the district, although not large, will compare favourably with the previous year; and I consider there is a steady advancement both in alluvial and quartz mining operations throughout the district which speaks well for its future prosperity. Monthly sittings of the Courts have been held regularly at the Lyell in the large room of Zanetti's Hotel (in the absence of a Courthouse, much required), which tends to a great extent to detract from the dignity and respect due to the Court; whilst the close proximity to the bar of the hotel certainly affects the demeanour of mining suitors and witnesses attending the sittings.

The *Statistical Returns* enclosed herewith show that there are 450 water-races, of an aggregate length of 350 miles, with 801 heads of water, valued at £19,399; 60 tail-races, valued at £1,529; 139 dams and reservoirs, valued at £4,307; 115 ground-sluices, valued at £1,790; which, together with the mining plant, estimated at £15,050, makes the total value of mining property in the district £42,675. I append returns showing the total population, cases disposed of in the several Courts, and the number of rights, licenses, and registrations issued during the year at each office. The sittings of the several Courts at Westport, Charleston, Lyell, and Reefton have (with two exceptions, caused by flooded rivers) been duly held on the dates originally appointed; but this is in a great measure due to the exceptionally fine weather on the Coast during the past eight months.

I have, &c.,

W. H. REVELL,
Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 6.

THE POPULATION of the District is estimated at 3,859 Souls, who are located as under:—

Subdistricts or Localities.					European.	Chinese.	Total.
Westport	...	...	...	...	2,347	17	2,364
Charleston	...	...	...	...	819	...	819
Lyell	...	...	...	...	626	50	676
Total	...	...	...	...	3,792	67	3,859

RETURN of CASES disposed of in the Resident Magistrate's and Warden's Courts during the Year.

					Civil.	Criminal.	Warden's.	Total.
Westport	...	...	...	...	154	135	7	296
Charleston	...	...	...	...	10	13	12	35
Lyell	...	...	...	...	82	42	9	133
Total	...	...	...	...	246	190	28	464

THE REVENUE for the Twelve Months, amounting to £3,800 16s. 2d., is made up as follows:—

	Westport.			Charleston.			Lyell.			Total.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Warden's Department	1,109	11	2	684	9	4	666	2	8	2,460	3	2
R. M. Department	167	16	0	31	4	0	151	0	0	350	0	0
Fees, Licensing Court	9	8	0	2	18	0	9	2	0	21	8	0
Spirit licenses	576	0	0	168	15	0	224	10	0	969	5	0
Total	1,862	15	2	887	6	4	1,050	14	8	3,800	16	2