

RETURN of Miners' Rights, Licenses, and Registrations issued during the Twelve Months.

	Westport.	Charleston.	Lyell.	Total.
Miners' rights	164	291	197	652
Business licenses, £5	2	...	...	2
„ „ £3	6	...	9	15
Water-race licenses, 2s. 6d.	76	79	90	245
„ „ 5s.	1	...	...	1
Registration, 10s.	12	1	7	20
„ „ 1s.	193	1,215	236	1,644
Applications	117	270	180	567
Agricultural leases	5	...	...	5
Gold-mining leases	4	7	5	16

THE Estimated YIELD of GOLD in District is about 15,952 oz. and 21 gr.

	Oz.	dwt.	gr.
Westport	2,104	0	21
Charleston	5,348	0	0
Lyell	8,500	0	0
Total	15,952	0	21

No. 7.

Mr. Warden REVELL to the UNDER-SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Reefton, 23rd April, 1880.

I have the honor to transmit herewith the statistical return for the year ending the 31st March ultimo, together with the following report, viz. :—

The Inangahua District was temporarily attached to the Buller District, and came under my charge in June last with a view of being permanently attached if it was found that the work of both districts could be fairly performed by one officer or otherwise pending a readjustment of the Wardens' districts. In carrying out the duties attached to this district, I have only been able to attend to the actual duties in connection with the several Courts, and am indebted to the Receiver of Gold Revenue for the general information in respect of quartz and alluvial workings throughout the district. This district during the past twelve months has felt, in common with the rest of the colony, the great depression in the money market, and, as a consequence, less activity has been exhibited in the various mines through the withdrawal of outside capital than in former years, and it has therefore had to depend almost entirely upon itself; and to this may be attributed the fact of so little prospecting being done. Attention has been directed chiefly to further opening up old established mines and erecting permanent works in connection therewith. Many hands were knocked off, and the several mines worked with a greater regard to economy, much of the work being done by contract, which has been found to answer much better than the old system of employing day-labour. Some time ago the rate of the ordinary miner's wages was reduced from £3 10s. to £3 per week. An attempt was made to hold out against the reduction: the strike, however, lasted but a very short time; a few, sooner than accept reduction, left the district; others, again, turned their attention to alluvial mining. Some of the companies which hitherto allowed their tailings to flow away are now taking steps to save them with the view ultimately of treating them.

It is worthy of notice that a few mines which have been wrought for a number of years unprofitably have been disposed of to adjoining and more prosperous companies. As an instance of this, the Wealth of Nations Company have purchased the mines of the New Independent and Vulcan Companies, and, with their own leases, will now hold 54 acres 2 roods 19 perches. Then, again, there are instances of adjoining claims amalgamating and larger companies being formed—viz., the Alexandra with Fiery Cross Company, No. 2 South Larry's with Caledonian Company.

One of the most important events of the year has been the revival of mining at the head of Murray Creek. In that locality the Golden Treasure Company have proved the existence of a very large body of payable stone. This Company was fortunate enough to purchase upon very easy terms the crushing plant, in close proximity to their mine, known as the Westland Battery, which they have kept employed upon stone from their mine for a long time past. It has been proved beyond doubt that, with greater crushing-power, the erection of which is contemplated, and strict economy in working, this mine would take its place as one of the best-paying in the district.

Advantage has been taken by two or three companies of the provisions of "The Mines Act 1878 Amendment Act, 1879," and they have made application thereunder for protection. It would appear as though some slight alteration or amendment was necessary, for, as it stands at present, it would be necessary for a company possessing two or three acres to incur a similar expenditure to a company possessing 16½ acres to entitle it to protection.