

the preference to their own countrymen had they shown a disposition to set in to work there. The gold is very fine and of excellent quality, and assays better than any gold in New Zealand. The proposed sludge-channel up the Arrawarra is at a standstill. Unfortunately, it is in the hands of a private individual, who is not in a position to carry out the work to any great extent. If it were in the hands of an energetic company possessing capital sufficient to carry it up on the level it is capable of being taken on, it would without doubt afford profitable employment to nearly double the number of the present population. These two fields are situate on the west side of the Longwood Range. On the east side are situate the Longwood workings and quartz reefs, from which so much was expected two years ago; but the want of the indispensable capital and equally indispensable energy, coupled with the drawback of a remarkably bad season, caused a depressing lull for a time. This, I am glad to say, has been again succeeded by renewed and increased activity in mining. A good many of the right sort of men have been attracted to the place. Some of these have already done well, and others hope to do the same; at any rate, I do not hear many complaining, and several parties are prospecting. I am informed by men whom I may term habitual gold-miners, from other parts of the colony, that there is payable gold in nearly all the gullies that would pay handsomely if there was fall. Several of the quartz claims and leases are tunnelling, but I think they are not deep enough. They can get leaders with gold in them, but not any size; and I am strongly impressed with the idea that large and, I should hope, rich reefs will be found 300 or 400 feet deeper. One battery has been erected, and, as in many other first enterprises, a mistake was made in buying what was supposed a cheap machine from Coromandel, which has proved very dear to the shareholders. The Longwood Reefing Company are crushing, and, from the quality of the stone which I have seen in the drive, it should pay a good dividend to the shareholders.

I have, &c.,

J. NUGENT WOOD,
Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

WEST WANGANUI GOLD FIELD.

No. 18.

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

SIR,—

Nelson, 23rd May, 1880.

I have the honor to return herewith the forms forwarded under cover of your circular letter of the 13th March, and at the same time to state that, owing to no alteration having taken place in mining matters in the West Wanganui District during the past twelve months, there is nothing of importance to report on.

I have, &c.,

A. MACKAY,
Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

WATER-RACES.

No. 19.

Mr. H. A. GORDON, Manager of the Nelson Creek Water-race, to the UNDER-SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Office of Nelson Creek Water-race, Hatter's Terrace, 9th April, 1880.

I have the honor to forward you general report on the transactions connected with the working and maintenance of the Nelson Creek Water-race from 1st July, 1879, to 31st March, 1880.

During the past nine months a good deal of prospecting has been done, and some new ground has recently been opened up on the opposite side of the range from Owen's Look-out, which is likely to prove payable for a considerable extent. Free water has been given for prospecting and for opening up claims to the value of £172 19s. 2d.

The value of water sold amounts to £1,750 5s. 7d., and the cost of maintenance to £1,009 6s. 6d.; thus leaving a balance of £746 19s. 1d. of receipts above expenditure. Taking the sales of water for the nine months previous, the present receipts show an increase of £369 17s. 6d.

The average number of persons engaged in mining operations by the aid of water from the race is the same as the previous year—viz., sixty-seven; and the amount of gold obtained by them, as far as can be ascertained, has been about 3,749 oz., which represents a value of £14,246 4s. Deducting the value of water sold from this amount, it leaves £12,489 18s. 5d., which is £4 15s. 6d. per man per week. This shows the average earnings of the miners to be large; but when the expenses of hydraulic plant and sawn timber are deducted, they are considerably reduced.

With regard to the cost of maintenance, the nature of the country through which the race is constructed will always necessitate a certain number of maintenance men to look after it, as the ground is steep and liable to slips.

I have, &c.,

HENRY A. GORDON,
Manager.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

No. 20.

Mr. J. Gow, Manager of the Waimea-Kumara Water-race, to the UNDER-SECRETARY for GOLD FIELDS.

SIR,—

Manager's Office, Kumara, 7th April, 1880.

I have the honor to forward herewith a general report upon the transactions connected with the working and maintenance of the Waimea-Kumara races for the financial period ending 31st March, 1880.