

Joyce's Gully.—About twenty-four men.

Abe's Gully.—Twenty men, the remainder distributed amongst the several gullies branching off the No Town Creek. There is a track in existence over this ground (from No Town to Molloy's), but it is almost impassable in winter, and never good even in summer. The distance is about seven or eight miles, chiefly level, with the exception of the pass over the range at Bill's Gully.

Ahaura Division.—The population has decreased slightly during the past twelve months, some having left for the Seventeen-mile Beach, others for New South Wales, and a few for the west coast of the North Island. The River Grey makes serious encroachments upon its banks every flood. The best agricultural land in the district is suffering through these incursions. A pack-track about 5½ miles long, being a deviation of the Amuri Road, was made by the Government about nine months ago. It has proved highly beneficial to residents at Kopara and Haupiri, also to drivers of stock from Amuri and Canterbury. About 6½ miles are still required to make travelling safe and easy between Ahaura and the Kopara-Haupiri District. About twelve months ago a small rush set in at the back of Lake Haupiri, but owing to the want of tracks and the consequent scarcity and costliness of provisions, nearly all the men abandoned the place. They made about £3 per man a week, the whole of which was required to pay for provisions. The distance from the end of the present track at the head of the Nelson Creek Water-race to the site of the Haupiri diggings is eight or nine miles, and it is said that it is an easy country for the construction of a pack-track. At present provisions are taken from Greymouth through Ahaura. The distance *viâ* Hatter's Terrace and Lake Hochstetter would be about one-half of the present route, and the risk and inconvenience of crossing Lake Haupiri in small canoes would be avoided if a track was made from the head of Nelson Creek (Government) Water-race. Miners, as a rule, have been doing tolerably well, have avoided Law Courts, and worked harmoniously together. Provisions of all kinds are lower in price than at any previous time.

Nelson Creek.—Owing to the constant and abundant supply of water rendered available for ground-slucing purposes by the Government Water-race from Lake Hochstetter, extensive mining operations are being carried on continuously at Nelson Creek. In proportion to the number of men engaged in mining, the yield of gold from this locality has been very good during the past year, but a very high percentage of it goes to the Government for water. Most of the claims using water from the Government race are being worked out with great rapidity. Several claims were abandoned last year, and only about three new ones were opened. The Nelson Creek Prospecting Association have had men in the field searching for fresh auriferous deposits, but they have met with no success so far.

Orwell Creek.—There has been a slight decrease in the mining population of this valley; still there is no doubt that more gold has been produced in spite of the diminution. Until lately three of the largest claims were held by registered companies, who got very little gold. About twelve months ago these claims were sold to private parties of miners, and, with brief occasional intermissions, have been paying very well ever since. In one of the claims (the Napoleon Hill) the weekly dividend frequently amounts to £15 per man, and sometimes even more—the number of shareholders being twelve.

Moonlight Creek.—All the miners here appear to be satisfied with their earnings. It is generally supposed that few of them are making less than £4 per week. A considerable number of Chinese are located in some of the back gullies. Last winter the County Council made a track from Ahaura to River Grey, in the direction of Moonlight Creek, and it has proved of great benefit and convenience to miners and settlers in that neighbourhood. The quartz reefs at Moonlight and Blackball, about which speculative excitement is worked up from time to time, are now quite neglected and deserted.

Callaghan's Creek.—The few men employed are all doing well, apparently. One or two parties of Chinese have begun to work there.

Half-ounce, Granville, Duffer's, Teviot, and Waipuna.—All these places are in immediate proximity to each other. Very few miners are left in these localities; several have gone away during the last twelve months. No new finds have been made. It is extremely probable that further diminution of population will ensue.

Blackwater, Little Grey, and Mossy Creek.—Very few European miners working in these valleys now. Large numbers of Chinese there. A considerable quantity of land has been taken up in the Little Grey District lately, for farming and grazing purposes.

In concluding my report, which I must admit is meagre enough, I beg to remind you that I have only had charge of this district for six months, and have been unable to inform myself thoroughly of its progress and requirements, my time having been fully occupied in holding Courts and acquainting myself with the offices under my supervision. I make this explanation as an apology for the scanty information afforded about so large and important a district. I am unable to enclose a return of gold exportation, as I have not been able to obtain reliable information on this subject.

During the past year there have been 352 civil and 276 criminal cases heard in the Resident Magistrate's Courts north of Teremakau (this return excludes Kumara business); and in the Warden's Court 78 cases on complaints, 102 mining disputes on objections, and 1,062 applications. The total amount of revenue, exclusive of gold duty and Kumara revenue, has been £5,422 8s. 10d. This does not include the revenue paid into borough accounts.

I have, &c.,

H. A. STRATFORD,
Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

No. 10.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Kumara, 4th April, 1881.

I have the honor to forward herewith annual statistics for the Kumara portion of my district, and to make the following report of the progress and state of mining matters:—

Population.—The European miners have, I think, slightly decreased since the last report was furnished, owing chiefly to the Temora rush. The Chinese remain about the same as last year.