

The next company to notice is the Prince of Wales Gold-Mining Company at Donoghue's, who are working by a similar process to the elevators to be erected on Jones's Flat. This claim is in working order, and only now waiting for a constant supply of water. They have also a drainage tunnel to their claim from the ocean beach 31 chains in length, and draining the ground to a depth of 50ft. at the place where the elevators are erected. The head-race is now constructed for a distance of nearly four miles, and is getting its supply from numerous small streams on the western slope of the Greenland Range. The race, so far as it is constructed, consists of tunnelling and open cutting, and will carry forty Government heads of water. The race is now within one and a half miles of the Mikonui River, from which it will obtain an unfailing supply of water. This company's claim is considered by many likely to prove the best-paying claim in the district.

Of the other large companies the old-established ones known as the Mount Greenland and Mount D'or Companies are foremost. The latter have lately obtained a special claim of fifty acres, and are making a considerable extension of their head-race. The Donnelly's Creek Gold-Mining Company have been greatly delayed by "pug" in the construction of the drainage tail-race tunnel, and the contractors were at length obliged to throw up the contract. The company have again let the unconstructed portion of the tunnel, and it is hoped that the new contractors will be more successful.

The Ross No. 2 Gold-Mining Company purchased a "Tiffin borer" for the purpose of testing their ground before sinking a main shaft, but it proved useless and was sent back again to Melbourne. This company have done nothing since.

The holders of other large special claims are doing nothing at present, if I except the "Ross United," who are prospecting the ground in different directions, and have sunk shafts to the depth of 200ft.; but water proves a great impediment to prospecting in all deep ground in the district.

Three large special claims have been declared vacant in consequence of the failure of the applicants to take them up, and the same course will probably have to be followed with others.

The above particulars will show how much the future of the Totara District depends on the success of the large mining undertakings which have been mentioned. So far as can at present be judged it may fairly be hoped that this success will shortly be assured, and that the expenditure of so much capital, energy, and skill will not long go without its reward.

Since writing the above I have seen, on a visit to Ross, some specimens of auriferous quartz brought in by Mr. John Gagliardi from Cedar Creek, about seven or eight miles from Ross. The stone, when inspected by means of an ordinary lens, appears to be richly auriferous, and, if there is really a reef of similar quality, I should think a valuable discovery has been made. Mr. Gagliardi has applied for a lease, and I believe several other persons have marked out ground in the vicinity.

I have, &c.,

J. GILES,

Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

No. 11.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Otranto, 29th March, 1884.

I have the honour to forward herewith enclosed statistical returns for the year ending the 31st March, 1884. I am sending them rather earlier than usual, as I leave to-day for Greymouth to release Mr. Warden Stratford, absent on leave. As regards mining matters generally I have nothing of importance to communicate, and I am sorry to add there has been no improvement, rather the reverse, during the last twelve months. By the aid of local subscriptions and a small subsidy from the County Council several localities have been partially prospected, but up to the present time without any good results. The Paringa and Haast Road is at last completed, so that the whole of the southern portion of the district is accessible for prospecting, which may in time lead to the discovery of a payable gold field.

I have, &c.,

FRANK BIRD,

Warden.

The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, Wellington.

No. 12.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Clyde, 16th May, 1884.

I have the honour, in forwarding the several returns asked for in your circular letter of the 18th February last, to submit the following general report on the position and prospects of the several mining sub-districts under my supervision:—

In alluvial mining there have occurred no events worthy of record, and I am led to believe that the yield of gold will be found to have fallen off from last year's amount. The population has, however, suffered no diminution, and the same amount of activity has been shown, to judge of which I am guided as well by the applications for mining privileges, &c., as from observation.

At Tinker's and Drybread, in the Blacks Division, the yield of gold has certainly been less than last year. A good deal of dead work has been done, the fruits of which, I trust, will show favourably in future reports. Some important amalgamations have been made: Mellor and Martin, who held a gold-mining lease, little of which has been worked, but which is known to be valuable, have joined the Undaunted Company, bringing also into the new property a two-fifth share of the XL water-race. They have the same run of gold in all these claims here, the best, it is believed, being where the ground is dipping away towards Thomson's Creek. The miners here are petition-