

Machines employed in Alluvial and Quartz-mining for the Year ending 31st March, 1886.

Locality.	Machinery employed in Alluvial Mining.											Machinery employed in Quartz Mining.										
	Puddling Machines.	Whims.	Whips or Pulleys.	Sluices, Toms, and Sluice-boxes.	Water-wheels.	Hydraulic Hose.	Pumps.	Dredges.	Quicksilver and Compound Cradles.	Derricks.	Stamp-heads crushing Cement.	Boring Machines.	Steam-engines employed winding, crushing, &c.		Crushing Machines.	Stamp-heads.	Water-wheels.	Whims.	Whips or Pulleys.	Buddles or Berdians.	Approximate Value of all Mining Plant and Machinery	
													No.	Aggregate h.p.								
Inangahua	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12	228	18	285	15	2	3	55	£ 124,580	
Charleston	..	..	..	..	80	3	70	..	..	50	..	13	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	3,000	
Lyell	..	..	..	..	23	14	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	45	3	..	..	..	11,000	
Murchison	..	..	..	..	45	27	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,200	
Westport	..	..	..	..	46	6	27	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	20	2	..	..	..	7,000	
Ahaura	..	..	..	..	500	2	350	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,800	
Waimea and Stafford	..	..	..	..	11,000	2	230	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,000	
Totara	..	..	..	..	8	40	3	40	6	..	..	..	5	220	..	..	..	..	..	..	14,000	
Hokitika and Kaniere	..	2	40	70	..	30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,500	
Greymouth	..	..	..	..	1,800	1	356	25	..	40	..	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,000	
Arnould	..	..	..	..	882	6	118	..	1	..	..	..	3	33	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,596	
Kumara	..	..	8	20	70	2	55	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,000	
Goldsborough	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Greenstone	..	..	..	..	1,000	..	34	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,500	
Okarito	..	..	..	..	50	3	..	3	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Totals	..	..	10	69	5,606	69	1,310	37	1	90	3	13	9	20	481	24	355	20	2	3	55	188,176

Present Position of Gold-mining.—The permanence of the West Coast gold-mines is an important factor in estimating the prospects of the railways, and, like the value of the lands, it is a subject on which there is a great diversity of opinion. There has been nothing like a large rush since 1876, when the Kumara field was opened out. We have therefore had seven or eight years of normal working. The following tables show the state of the gold-mining industries on the West Coast during that period—the last seven years :—

Yield of Gold.

—		1879.	1880.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Alluvial gold	...	470,871	505,958	419,881	425,653	378,217	377,217	361,985
Quartz-gold...	...	100,190	69,300	90,090	94,325	88,935	69,300	109,340
Totals	...	£ 571,061	575,258	509,971	519,978	467,152	446,517	471,325

Number of Miners Employed.

—		1879.	1880.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.
Alluvial-miners	...	6,497	6,886	7,633	7,332	6,986	5,924	5,344
Quartz-miners	...	447	476	479	499	834	563	563
Totals	...	6,944	7,362	8,112	7,831	7,820	6,487	5,907

Value of Machinery Employed.

—		1879.	1880.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Alluvial-mining	...	107,370	114,179	113,450	127,630	158,536	182,980	186,280
Quartz-mining	...							

These tables show that, while alluvial mining is on the decline, quartz-reefing has not only held its own, but made a slight advance. The Mokihinui reefs appeared in the returns for the first time last year ; and in all probability the Owen reefs will appear next year.

Permanence of Gold-mining.—With reference to the permanence of alluvial mining, the ordinary river-diggings are undoubtedly coming to an end ; but the hydraulic workings in gravel and cement terraces will last many years. So also will the beach workings, which afford employment to small parties all along the coast.