

extremely well. My attention was directed to the country up Jacob's River; but the extremely wet weather and the flooded state of the rivers during my visit to this district prevented me from getting inland from the ocean-beach. There are no inland tracks from Cook River to the Mahitahi, and the country being densely timbered with thick undergrowth, and swampy in places, makes it extremely difficult to get provisions for men to prospect, however much they were inclined; and until the country is opened up by tracks, very little will be done here towards legitimate mining. Recently gold has been found in the terraces at the Abbey Rocks, where several parties of miners are at work, some of whom are doing remarkably well. The character of the gold obtained here is entirely different from any that is found south of Ross. It is much coarser, and does not appear to have travelled a great distance. The same character of gold, I was informed, was found at Bullock Creek, which is about sixteen miles south of the Abbey Rocks. From the nature of the country and character of the gold obtained, I think there is a prospect of a large area of payable ground being discovered in this neighbourhood; but with the limited population there is in this part of the country, and the difficulty of getting provisions, unless rich patches are found to cause a rush of miners to the place, the ground may remain a number of years before it is prospected. A few miners are employed here and there on the beaches between the Haast and the Okura Rivers. The sea has lately made inroads on a projecting point of land near the Okura River, which has given several miners profitable employment at surfacing. Gold has also recently been found in the Gorge River in conjunction with large quantities of ironsand and stream-nickel, the latter metal being of a highly magnetic character. The place where the gold has been found on this river is between the ocean-beach and the junction of the Jerry River, a distance of about five miles. The gold cannot so far be traced higher up than this point. Mr. Lindsay, a miner working on this river, informed me that a man will make from 8s. to 10s. per day on the beaches washing them with an ordinary cradle. He and his two sons got about 5oz. of gold in nine days working in this manner. Mr. Lindsay has prospected some of the low terraces alongside the river, and found them to contain auriferous drift which will pay good wages to work if water is brought on to them. He is now making arrangements to work the ground by hydraulic sluicing, and is getting iron pipes constructed for that purpose. I was informed that gold had been got in Longridge Creek, Ryan's and Hacket Rivers, and also on the terraces on the northern side of Big Bay, and in the Okura Creek, which flows into the Holyford about two miles from the sea; but in all these places, with the exception of the Gorge River, the gold that has been found is not of a payable nature for working. I was informed of a large quartz reef about eight miles up the Jackson River, which was represented as being 30ft. in thickness, containing a large amount of iron-pyrites said to contain gold; but at the time of my visit to this district the rivers were so flooded that I was unable to cross them. The character of the rocks and the appearance of the country would lead one to infer that it is a country where different minerals will be found; and the recent discoveries of tin and nickel in the Gorge River fully justify this view. There is a large belt of olivine rock passing through Mount Rickards about 5,000ft. above sea-level, having a granite belt on the western side; and where this olivine belt occurs again, on the Red Hill, about 6,000ft. above sea-level, the granite is on the eastern side. Towards the sea-coast, between Big Bay and Jackson's Bay, there is a narrow belt of limestone mixed in places with metamorphic slate, and on the top of this formation there is a deposit of moraine-matter that has at one time been deposited by glacial action from the high ranges. It is in the rivers cutting through this moraine where the gold, tin, and nickel have been found. This portion of the country is totally without roads or tracks, which makes it a difficult undertaking for persons to prospect it. A good horse-track is greatly required from Jackson's Bay to Gorge River, thence along the range to join the track leading from Martin's Bay to Lake Wakatipu. This would in a measure open up the country, and enable prospecting to be carried on.

*Rimu.*—This field still maintains a good population, and the miners, as a rule, are generally making fair wages. The ground here averages about 50ft. in depth, and the principle of working is by shafts and driving out the wash-dirt, which is about 5ft. thick, hauling up by means of horse-whims and whips, and stacked in a paddock. When this paddock is full, the wash-dirt is sluiced in the ordinary manner. There is no fall here, neither a sufficient quantity of water on the field to work the ground by hydraulic sluicing; and it is questionable if it could be worked in a more profitable manner, even were the circumstances favourable for hydraulic-working, as the gold is confined principally to the layer next the bottom.

*Waimea and Stafford.*—This district still maintains a good population, but the ground is generally of a poor character. Were it not for the good supply of water from the Government water-race this district would have almost been deserted, or, at least, there would have been a very limited number of miners able to get profitable employment. The ground that the Government water-race commands will yet support a limited population for some years; but it is being fast worked out, which, no doubt, in time, will either necessitate the race being extended or worked at a direct loss. The miners in this locality state that there is a large area of auriferous ground on the terraces on the opposite side of the Waimea Creek to that which the race commands. But an extension of the race to these terraces would involve an outlay of about £20,000. This extension was originally embraced in the scheme of the Waimea water-supply, and termed Branch C; but whether there is a sufficient area of payable auriferous ground