GENERAL.

I do not think there has been any diminution in the number of miners at work in the district, and from inquiries made at the banks it appears there has been but slight falling-off in the quantity of gold purchased, and that falling-off is, I think, fully accounted for by the decrease in the rainfall, which has been much below the average during the past year, and in consequence of which sluicing operations and mining generally has been materially restricted. The goldfields revenue shows a slight falling-off this year as compared with last year, which is due entirely to the cancellation of a large number of special claims and licensed hoidings, which were taken up for speculative purposes, many of them during the dredging boom which occurred some three or four years ago.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of Mines, Wellington. ALFRED GREENFIELD, Warden.

No. 8.

Mr. Warden KEDDELL to the UNDER-SECRETARY of MINES, Wellington.

SIR,— Warden's Office, Reefton, 20th May, 1892.

I have the honour to forward you herewith the usual statistical returns for the year ended 31st March last, and also a report for the same period on the Mangahua District, which was added to my charge in June last.

Gauged by the yield of gold and the amount of dividends declared, the result of the year's operations may, I think, be considered as fairly successful. Good returns have been obtained from the mines of the Fiery Cross, Big River, Cumberland, Globe, and No. 2 South Keep It Dark Companies, which have returned substantial dividends to their shareholders. During the past year the calls exceeded those of the previous year by £5,552 6s. 8d., whilst the dividends are larger by £3,418. The dividends have exceeded the calls by £4,786 10s. The yield of alluvial gold is less than the previous year by 300oz. Less quartz has been crushed for a slightly better yield. From the date of the opening of the district to 31st March last 542,119 tons of quartz have been raised and crushed, from which 407,413oz. of gold were obtained, which represents a value of £1,586,019, out of which sum dividends were paid to the amount of £515,849. The yield of alluvial gold for the same period is approximately estimated at 109,392oz., of the value of £401,101—making the total production of the district 516,805oz. of gold, of the value of £1,987,120.

I append a list giving a detailed account of the calls made, dividends declared, &c., by the various companies in the district during the last twelve months.

LIST of CALLS made, DIVIDENDS declared, &c., by the various Companies.

Name of Company.	Calls made.			Dividends declared.			Stone crushed.	Yield.	Value.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	Tons.	Oz.	£	s.	d.
Fiery Cross	...			5,643	0	0	2,431	2,818	11,434	13	3
Royal	250	0	0	...			120	100	400	7	3
Inglewood	...			...			450	415	1,640	0	0
Pandora	600	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Merrijigs...	500	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Golden Bar	300	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Hard to Find	100	0	0	...			60	17	67	0	0
Reform	100	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Murray Creek	86	6	8	...			...	...	...		
Hercules...	1,200	0	0	...			238	145	584	0	3
Homeward Bound ...	1,300	0	0	...			45	158	639	15	11
Venus	...			...			505	298	1,177	7	8
Gallant	500	0	0	600	0	0	1,083	446	1,793	19	9
Happy Valley	400	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Golden Lead	1,500	0	0	...			2,419	611	2,443	0	0
Triumph...	300	0	0	...			...	...	...		
National...	400	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Alston	100	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Stanley	100	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Rise and Shine	150	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Lord Edward	1,100	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Big River	...			9,600	0	0	1,652	3,704	14,807	9	0
Dillon	200	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Alexandra	400	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Frying-pan	187	10	0	...			...	...	...		
Sir Charles Russell ...	1,100	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Progress	600	0	0	...			4,750*	1,901	7,719	1	0
Specimen Hill	333	6	8	...			...	...	...		
Golden Treasure	900	0	0	...			70	36	134	12	0
Welcome	1,875	0	0	...			210	258	1,035	4	6
Sir Francis Drake... ...	900	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Golden Hill	300	0	0	...			...	...	...		
Blue Sky	200	0	0	...			...	...	...		