

No. 8.

Mr. N. D. COCHRANE, Inspector of Mines, to the UNDER-SECRETARY of MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Inspector of Mines' Office, Westport, 30th April, 1894.

I have the honour to report as follows on the mines worked under the provisions of "The Mining Act, 1891," in the Marlborough, Nelson, and Westland Districts for the past year, and to enclose summary of battery returns:—

PICTON.

Endeavour Inlet Antimony-mine.—(11/12/93): Two stopes working above the No. 7 level, about 90ft. up, employing two men and trucker on one shift. Drew Mr. Wearne's attention to some of the hanging-wall laths requiring renewal, and he agreed to have them at once attended to. At other places the country is heavy, and much inclined to swell, but with no tendency to run, and Mr. Wearne is taking care to renew the timber where required. Air led in in 5in. pipes. Ladders good and sloping. The width of the lode is very irregular, perhaps 20ft., but much the greater part of this is gangue. Strong foot-wall, but the hanging-wall is not so clearly defined. Work in No. 2 level has been stopped pending the result of the smelting, but is likely to be resumed. Manager's name not posted, and no report of the examinations of the mine; but these will be attended to. Copy of Act in office. Fly-wheel and friction-wheel near stone-breaker not protected, but a bar will be put round them. Total number of men employed, including battery, seventeen.

WAIKAKAHO.

Ravenscliff Quartz-mine has not resumed work, but Mr. Turner informs me that a start is likely to be made shortly, when it is to be hoped the fortune of the mine may prove more favourable than formerly.

COLLINGWOOD.

Johnston's United Quartz-mine was not inspected during the year, as other work prevented me from visiting the district, but the returns from the battery for the past few months have been very poor.

REEFTON.

Progress Quartz-mine.—This mine was inspected three times during the year. On the last occasion (13/2/94) Mr. George Black, formerly of Big River, was in charge. Air fairly good, timbering well attended to, and mine generally in good order. No. 4 level is being extended to the west, where the stone has pinched out. Two men are stoping, two stopes above this, in the foot-wall block, which will average 5ft. in width. Two men were stoping to the east of and 80ft. above this, where the average width of reef is about 3ft. From near this a winze is down 36ft., but it was stopped, as the air was not good, and connection with the stoping below is to be made by uprising. It is satisfactory to find the work stopped, and the men not having to work on in poor air. A winze is down 140ft. from No. 4 level in the hanging-wall block, where the reef is nearly 3ft. wide, and payable stone. This will serve to connect with the next level, for the opening-up of which the shaft is at present being sunk. A miner named Robert Annet had his leg broken in this mine on the 18th April. He had been taking down a loose piece of stone, and had taken his stand right in front of a "tom," which prevented his retreat when the stone came away. Forty-eight men in all are employed in the mine, in three shifts. Plan and report kept, the latter a little behind.

Globe Quartz-mine.—(10/2/94): The shaft at this date had been sunk to a depth of 825ft., and the No. 6 level opened out. 150ft. of cross-cutting to south has been done, and it is expected that 250ft. more will require to be driven before the line of reef is cut. Six men are driving, in three shifts. Timbering and air right. A winze has been sunk from No. 5 level a depth of 150ft. on the underlie, in which the stone pinched out at 100ft. 75ft. ahead of this another winze was started, but the quartz only lived down 8ft. About 80ft. above No. 5 three stopes are working on stone about 8ft. wide, but 6ft. of this does not contain gold. Seven men are employed here in one shift. In the No. 1 level there are four men driving, in two shifts, on quartz which contains no gold. This is at a point 500ft. distant from the old Globe workings, and it is to be continued on the chance of meeting payable stone. Twenty-two men in all are employed. The prospects of this once prosperous mine are at present anything but bright.

Wealth of Nations Quartz-mine.—(9/2/94): Four stopes working 110ft. below the No. 1 level. The lode varies from 2ft. to 18ft. in width, and is very irregular. This block of quartz is 70ft. long, and there is 60ft. of backs. Some loose pieces of stone in the stopes to which Mr. Watson's attention was directed are to be taken down. Five feet in the hanging-wall there is a second lode which will average 9ft. in width, and about 40ft. long; the amount of backs is unknown. From the No. 2 or 350ft. level a winze is being sunk, and at present is down 20ft. Air good. Plan and report kept. Act well observed. The prospects of this mine are improved, and, although the yield of gold is only about 5dwt., there is now a fair prospect of its again paying, after fourteen years work without dividends.

Keep-it-Dark Quartz-mine.—(9/2/94): The timbering which Mr. Fitzmaurice was requested to see to at my last inspection in November has been attended to, lining-sets having been put in, and the timber at the top of the winze renewed. The blind shaft, which was sunk a further depth of 125ft., and which had been allowed to fill with water, was now being baled. Its depth is 375ft., which, with the main shaft, makes a total of 875ft. below the level of the brace. Directed the manager's attention to a bad place near where the men were baling, and he gave orders to have it at once taken down. A cross-cut is to be driven to west from the bottom of the blind shaft, in which it is expected the line of reef will be cut at 60ft. The No. 3 or 500ft. level is being extended to the north, on the track of the reef, some 300ft. away from the Wealth of Nations boundary. No other work is doing at present. Air sufficient at date of inspection, but likely to be poor when the