

If the Government could be induced to make the experiment of establishing at Waikaia a house in connection with the Caversham Industrial School—making a draft of, say, ten or fifteen of the stoutest, fittest lads of fifteen or sixteen years of age, placing the home under the charge of a practical miner who has a wife and no children, and either starting a mining operation themselves, or letting the boys work, say, one or two, to certain selected decent miners, it would produce good results. This space will not allow me to work out the details, but the thing could be done at small cost. The condition of boys at Caversham is to be deplored. The State might be converting every one of these boys into farmers, fruit-growers, poultry-farmers, bee-keepers, gold-miners, dairymen, or any of the land-developing industrials. They might be brought up in the purest air, with all the glorious influences of a bounteous and loving Nature around them.

A colony of separate houses near a place like Waikaia, not more than twenty boys in a house, with a carefully-selected married couple over every house, would work out a natural redemption for these waifs of poverty and products of criminal neglect.

Their life needs expansion, not the contraction of a prison-house with its dreary round of hopeless task.

The Stipendiary Magistrate goes monthly to Waikaia, and could well arrange to make an extra day and inspect and supervise the establishment. I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of Mines, Wellington.

R. S. HAWKINS, Warden.

No. 13.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Naseby, 20th April, 1894.

I have the honour to submit herewith the usual statistical returns for the Mount Ida district for the year ended 31st March, 1894, and I have to report as follows on the general aspect of mining at the various centres and subdivisions of the district :—

NASEBY.

The supply of water has been exceptionally good throughout the past year, and miners have taken advantage of it most perseveringly; and, although no sensational yields have been brought under my notice, the returns have on the whole been fairly satisfactory. The claims at Mount Buster have yielded well, and from what can be gathered there is every probability of a continuance of good returns from that locality. At White's Gully, Brown, Donaldson, and Smith have displayed praiseworthy energy in getting their claim into working order; they have a water-race seven miles in length from Deep Creek for three heads, and one of ten miles from Undaunted No. 3 for seven heads. The races are well constructed, and have involved considerable outlay. They have also made some miles of branch races from their various dams, of which they have four. The ground is worked on the elevating principle, necessitating the use of over a thousand feet of iron-piping, graduating from 13in. to 7in. There is a pressure of 110ft. on the elevator, and 100ft. on the breaking-down nozzle. The lift is now about 12ft., and the yield, so far, is very satisfactory. The party has applied for a special claim of 17 acres. There is a very considerable area of ground in this locality which is apparently of an exactly similar character, and it is thought would more than probably be found to be equally payable if similar appliances were made use of.

Messrs. Guffie and Inder's claim in Roach's Gully, practically within the Borough of Naseby, has been most systematically worked during the past year, with most satisfactory results, the yield being considerably in excess of anything obtained hitherto. In the main gully the Extended Company has had a more satisfactory return than has fallen to its lot for a number of years. The perseverance displayed by this company is certainly deserving of even better results. Recently quite a number of claims have been taken up in the main gully and the small gullies running into it. The prospects of these are promising, but definite results cannot be obtained, as the claims are only in an initiative state. Altogether, there is but little change to be noted in the immediate vicinity of Naseby, either in the workings or the number of men employed. Greater difficulties are now being experienced in making the old established leads or runs of wash remunerative, and it is a matter of deep regret that so very little prospecting is carried out where there are indications in so many directions of payable ground being in existence.

A very considerable amount of work has been carried out on the Government water-race during the past year, and, although the work necessitated a considerable stoppage in the supply of water, the result has been compensatory. A large and constant supply of water has been brought in since the repairs were effected. On the westward side of Naseby matters remain in about the same condition, the only matter calling for remark in the way of new ground being operated upon is in the case of Wheeler and Fennessey's party, at the Idaburn, above the Government water-race. They have now got Perry and party's water on their claim, and the yield is, so far, satisfactory. Another claim has recently been granted there, which will, it is thought, together with the ground now being worked, give a couple of years' work. This ground was found to be payable by Wheeler when employed repairing the Government race, and there is little or no doubt that a large area of the ground in that neighbourhood is auriferous, and, presumably, payable so; but little or no prospecting has been carried out in that direction for many years. The time has arrived when it has become absolutely necessary that serious attention should be given to the subject of prospecting on a systematic basis. There is no doubt whatever that, were the provisions of Part XV. of the regulations of the Mining Act taken advantage of to a reasonable degree, benefits would ensue to the district generally, and it is to be hoped that ere long steps may be taken locally in that direction.