

WAIKAKA.

A few miners, chiefly Chinese, continue to make a living at the head of this valley, obtaining their water-supply by means of small dams.

The European miners last year sent in a petition to have some auriferous land belonging to Mr. Patterson resumed for mining purposes, the old reserve being so far worked out as to afford no more profitable working. Mr. Patterson, who bought the land from Logan's trustees, was willing to exchange it for one of the old reserves better adapted to agricultural purposes, and more convenient to himself, and to give or take money for novelty of exchange, leaving the valuation entirely in the hands of the Department of Lands. I went to Waikaka and interviewed the miners there, and was satisfied of the desirability of the resumption and exchange, and reported accordingly. The miners had, even before Logan's sale, interviewed me, and informed me of the highly auriferous nature of the particular sections now proposed to be resumed. The good faith of the miners petitioning is shown by the deposit of money to cover expenses, and they are much disappointed that their money should have been taken, and that several months should be allowed to lapse without any attempt being made to meet their wishes. The resumption would have given employment to some thirty men, and the construction of a dam could have been proceeded with ready for the winter rains. It is said that a factious opposition has been stirred up by a person no longer resident in the district; but, if this is so, there is no apparent reason why the petitioners should have their just requests indefinitely set aside, and it is to be hoped the department will see its way to actively support the interest of the miners, and obtain an early decision on their petition.

TAPANUI.

Mining in this part of the district is carried on by about forty men, of whom half are Chinese. On the whole, mining matters are looking up. Two dredges are being built on the Pomahaka River, and a special claim of 80 acres has been applied for, and the application adjourned for survey. Several persons are prospecting in the Upper Pomahaka and Leitham, while others are mining on private land about Logan's Hill. This land has passed into the hands of several small-farmers, and they, with their sons, are getting small quantities of gold, but the want of water during the summer months has been a serious drawback to them. A few miners are cradling in the Pomahaka, between Conical Hills and the Clutha River, and are said to be making fair wages.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of Mines, Wellington.

ROBERT S. HAWKINS, Warden.

No. 13.

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

SIR,—

Warden's Office, Naseby, 30th April, 1895.

I have the honour to submit herewith the annual statistics of the mining industry in the Mount Ida district for the year ending 31st March, 1895, and the following report of the various centres, for your information:—

The year just closed commenced with great promise of an unusually good supply of water. Towards the middle and end of the year, however, the weather became, and has since continued to be, particularly dry. As a natural consequence, miners from one end of the district to the other have been, if not actually compelled to stop work, at any rate very much retarded in their operations, and the general results of the year's work have not been so satisfactory as I had every reason to look forward to and anticipate at the commencement of the twelve months now under report.

No actually new finds have been reported to me during the year, but revived attention is apparently being directed to several localities which have been, comparatively, dormant for a number of years, and, judging from what has come under my notice with regard to some of the places alluded to, I entertain strong hopes of a satisfactory outcome.

I regret that, notwithstanding the greater inducements offered in the way of aid towards prospecting, very little has been done in this district during the year. I feel assured that if earnest attention were paid to this subject, and combined action taken, payable ground would be developed. I alluded in my last annual report to certain ground being opened up at Idaburn by Wheeler and party; the anticipations then indulged in, I am glad to learn, have been fully borne out, the party in question having had a remarkably good return for their labour. This is a case in point, showing what may be achieved by even a little prospecting, and may well be held up as an example and inducement to many of the youths in the district, who, it is to be regretted, display little or no desire to prosecute work of that nature. I again express the hope that ere long energetic steps may be taken to insure further prospecting being carried out. As I have said in previous reports, it is a subject of the gravest import, both to the mining community and the business people depending upon the continuance of gold-mining as a permanent industry.

OPHIR AND VICINITY.

A little stir has taken place in the neighbourhood of German Gully, which is situated on the western face of Raggedy Ridge, between Ophir and Manorburn. There are now some twenty miners apparently settled there, some of whom have done very well, and are continuing to do so; others are making, at any rate, wages, and there are a few new arrivals prospecting. The ground now being worked shows an average depth of 8ft. The work is carried on both by stripping and driving. The gold is principally found on the rock-bottom, and even penetrating 6in. into the rock in crevices; it is of a bright colour and good standard. The scarcity of water, as usual, is the great drawback to the place, as some of the men now at work have to carry the washdirt a distance of half a mile to water. If a good supply were available, the returns would be extremely good, and I