

RETURN

To an Address of the Legislative Assembly, for a Report from the Gold Commissioner, on the Omineca District.

*Colonial Secretary's Office,
25th March, 1872.*

A. ROCKE ROBERTSON,
Colonial Secretary.

Mr. O'Reilly to the Colonial Secretary.

VICTORIA, 21st March, 1872.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, calling upon me for a Report on the Omineca District, together with any suggestions as to the best means of facilitating communications with the same, and the amount required for Trails leading to that country for the ensuing season.

In reply, I would beg leave to refer to my letter of the 23rd October (already in your hands) for a general report on the subject, including the population, the yield and extent of the mines, &c., during the past year, and the prospects for the coming season.

Detailed Returns of the Revenue collected can best be obtained from the Treasury and Audit Departments; the aggregate amount was \$14,707 32.

The population at no time exceeded fifteen hundred, of whom about nine hundred were actually employed in mining; and, judging from the number of claims that were worked to advantage at the close of last year, I am of opinion that 800 to 1,000 men will return there this season.

With regard to the request that I would offer a suggestion as to the means of facilitating communication, and the amount necessary for trails, I would venture to say that I do not, as an unprofessional, feel competent to give any decided opinion as to the particular lines of communication, and the amount required to carry them out; nor can I think that my opinion on these subjects would be of much practical value; but I am convinced that it is highly important that both the route from the Coast, *via* the Skeena River, and the Trail from Quesnel to Omineca, should be completed as early as possible, and that a sufficient sum for the purpose should be placed at the disposal of the Agent of the Government selected to carry out these works. I have, &c.

(Signed) P. O'REILLY.

Mr. O'Reilly to the Colonial Secretary.

GERMANSEN CREEK, OMINECA,
23rd October, 1871.

SIR,—I have the honor to report, for the information of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, that the Mines on Germansen Creek have failed to realize the expectations formed of them in the early part of the season, and at present there are but few companies taking out pay; several are, however, preparing to test the hills on the upper portion of the creek during the coming winter, and should they be successful, it is in contemplation to construct large ditches, which will greatly facilitate the working of the benches and hills on either side of the creek.

I am, however, enabled to report more favorably of Manson River and its tributaries, which have, notwithstanding the difficulties attendant on the opening of the mines, in many instances paid the miners handsomely.

Several ditches are now being constructed with a view of conveying water to the benches and hills of Manson River and Slate Creek, where a very considerable amount

of gold has already been obtained; and I have no hesitation in saying that the diggings in this portion of the District are sufficiently established to justify the belief that they will afford profitable employment to a large number of men for years to come.

On Manson River, the greater portion of the season has been spent in working the surface diggings in the bed of the stream, which have barely paid expenses, but it is now apparent that a deep channel exists, as was the case in Williams Creek, and the most experienced miners in the District are of opinion that this channel contains the lead for which they have been searching; and from the prospects obtained by the only two Companies who have succeeded in sinking to the bed-rock, it would appear that their opinions are well founded.

I have laid over the claims in the District, from the 15th instant to the 1st June, 1872. A copy of the Notice I forward herewith, and I will thank you to have it inserted in the Government Gazette.

It is difficult to ascertain, with any degree of accuracy, the amount of gold taken from the Omineca Mines during the present season, but the Returns that have been furnished to me by the foremen of the principal Companies, show a yield of over three hundred thousand dollars, and to this may be fairly added not less than one hundred thousand more, taken away in the hands of miners, of which there is no return, making in all four hundred thousand dollars.

At the request of a number of miners, I have reserved a plot of land on the north bank of Manson River, at the mouth of Slate Creek, for a Town Site, and I have had it marked off into thirty lots, since which several traders have built substantial houses, and commenced business there. I have, &c.

(Signed) P. O'REILLY.

*Return of the amount of Revenue collected in Omineca District during 1871,
under its proper headings.*

Licenses	\$ 2,645 00
Free Miner's Certificates	4,672 50
Mining Receipts General	6,093 25
Land Revenue	611 50
Fines, Forfeitures, and Fees	483 07
Rents (Exclusive of Land)	200 00
Fees of Office	2 00
	————— \$14,707 32

Treasury, 18th March, 1872.

(Signed) JOHN GRAHAM.

NOTE.—The Collections for the months of November and December, Returns for which have not yet been received at the Treasury, are not included in the above Statement.