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Date 21 December

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C. C. G Fields reports on state of Ballaarat Gold Fields since his arrival.

Sir,

I have the honour to report for the information of His Excellency the Lt. Governor upon the state of this Gold Field so far as I have ascertained it since my arrival.

2- the general feeling of the inhabitants in reference to the late events is with the authorities in the steps taken to support the body of men banded together for purposes opposed to peace and good order.

At the same time there is a considerable body of men who would, if not deterred by the result of the late collision

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His Excellency has seen this collision be prepared to report the acts which led to it.

3- It seems universally admitted that these ? are principally Irishman who occupy the Eureka workings in considerable numbers in the immediate vicinity of the Stockade with whose defenders they openly express their sympathy and with whom many if not the majority of them were more or less implicated.

4- From these persons several claims for compensation for tents and property destroyed as they allege, by the wanton conduct of the Mounted Police the attack on the stockade – have been laid before the Commission of Enquiry.-The Memorials have been received without any particular course having been determined on in regards to the mode of settling these questions but the Commissioners have stated that they will hear the evidence on such cases on a day to be found towards the conclusion of their proceedings here.

5-as the only offices of the Government upon the Commission I did not offer any stenuous opposition to enquiry into these cases but contented myself with expressing my opinion that the purposes for which it was forwarded did not propose such investigations and that the difficulties of so doing could not be calculated upon whilst the utility of the Commission might be very seriously affected.

6- The amount of claims put in is about £2000 and looking at the very doubtful attitude of the claimants I look on them as petitioners.

7- In going over the Gold Fields I have not head any expression of ill feeling amongst the miners in general and Inspector Templeton and Daly have commenced their duties at the Gravel Pits and Eureka – Mr. Daly at the latter.

8- no search for individual miners has yet been made owing to the excitement prevailing and the opinion that until the police are ? it would not be judicious to do so. The Commissioners in deciding disputed claims in which they have been busily occupied during the last two days have exacted the production of licences by the disputants and have notified that they will at once give away the claims of any unlicensed miners. In his dispatch which goes with this Mr. Rede has informed His Excellency of the contingency which may arise in renewing the search for licences and which is possible but not possible in the opinion of a great many persons. In the mean time very few licences are taken out since the order for Martial Law was rescinded. It seems clear then that unless the Police proceed to demand licences the law may be looked upon as virtually abandoned. I shall use every endeavour to ascertain how the step could be met – which as yet since the receipts by Mr. Rede of His Excellency's dispatch (confidential) I have not been able to do owing to my being on the Inquiry.

9- I have not sent Mr. Rede away as Mr Howard? has not arrived and even then I doubt whether it will be desirable to have removed every one present during the recent disturbances when the subject of them will be one of examination by the Commission.

10- I lament to report the death at 4.15 this morning of Captain Wise of the 40th Regiment.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

C Wright

Chief Commissioner of the Goldfields