

1878.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE GOLD FIELDS OF NEW ZEALAND

(REPORT ON.)

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated 3rd August, 1869.

“That it is desirable that the Government should cause to be laid upon the Table of this House, during each session, a Report embodying a general account of the present condition of the gold fields of the colony, their advancement or otherwise during the preceding year, and their probable prospects; together with particulars showing the average price of provisions during the year on each gold field, the rate of wages, estimated population, and such other information as would afford a comprehensive idea of the general condition of the mining interest in the colony; and that His Excellency be requested to forward a copy of such Report to Her Majesty’s Secretary of State for the Colonies.”
(*Mr. W. H. Harrison.*)

To the Hon. ROBERT STOUT, MINISTER OF LANDS.

Secretary for Gold Fields Office,

SIR,—

Wellington, 24th August, 1878.

I have the honor to forward the annual report on the gold fields. In the Appendix will be found the Wardens’ reports of their respective districts, and statements of the export of gold, revenue, number of miners, mining plant, water-races, and other statistics, tabulated in as nearly as possible the same form and order as in previous Gold Fields Reports, so that comparisons between different years may be rendered easy.

I have, &c.,

JAMES MCKERROW,
Secretary for Gold Fields.

REPORT.

In giving a general idea of the advancement or otherwise of the gold fields during the year, the first thing to be noticed is the

YIELD OF GOLD.

There is no way of arriving at absolute certainty in this, as we do not know what is used up in the colony—the trade estimates this at 18,000 oz. per annum; nor can it be known what is hoarded or smuggled. But, assuming these unknown elements as constant from year to year, and taking no further notice of them as probably not very material, we have the Customs returns of what was exported, and, taking account of that only, there has been (Table 5)—

For the twelve months ended 31st December, 1877,	Oz.	Value.
an export of	371,685	£1,496,080
For the twelve months ended 31st December, 1876,		
an export of	322,016	1,284,328
Or an increase for 1877 of	49,669	£211,752
Similarly, the quarterly return (Table 7)—		
For the three months ended 31st March, 1878,		
gives an export of	102,630	£411,484
For the three months ended 31st March, 1877,		
an export of	82,241	330,167
Or an increase of	20,389	£81,317

MINING POPULATION AND ITS EARNINGS.

Table 9 gives the number of miners on 31st March, 1878, at 15,559; on the 31st March, 1877, the number was 16,770, or a mean for the year of 16,180; and, as the value of gold exported for the same twelve months is £1,577,397, it follows that each miner would, on an average, have nearly £97 10s. for the year.