

APPENDIX.

REPORT ON GOLD FIELDS, ETC., VISITED, AND WORKS IN PROGRESS ON GOLD FIELDS.

Mr. H. A. GORDON, Inspecting Engineer, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

Mines Department, Wellington, 30th May, 1885.

I have the honor to submit annual report on works undertaken wholly by the Government, or by subsidy to County Councils, for the development of the mines in the colony, and likewise on works connected with mining on the fields I visited during the year ending the 31st March, 1885.

SUBSIDIZED ROADS AND TRACKS.

The subsidized roads and tracks in course of construction during the year have been as follows :—

COROMANDEL.—*Track, Golden Belt to Tiki.*—This track will give facilities for the ground to be worked between the Matawai Creek and Tiki, and the quartz conveyed to the crushing batteries, at either of those places. The cost of this work has been £239.

Road, Tokatea Saddle to Battery.—This road is constructed about 8 feet wide, with as easy grades as the nature of the ground would admit, which enables the quartz to be brought from the mines at Tokatea saddle to the Tokatea Company's crushing battery. The total cost of this work has been £370.

Road, Matawai Battery to Vaughan's Claim.—The work here consisted in widening and reducing the grades in portions of the original track, constructed to Vaughan's and Vizard's claims, so as to enable drays to be used to convey the quartz from the mines to the crushing battery at Matawai Creek. This road is completed, and has cost £357.

Track, Mercury Bay to Waitai.—The work consisted in improving the original bush track, which was in a very bad state of repair, and almost impassable. This track is used by the residents of Mercury Bay to get to Coromandel. The cost has been £100.

Track, Waikoromiko.—This work consisted in improving and extending the track from Tokatea Saddle to Waikoromiko, to enable the miners to get their quartz brought from their mines to the crushing batteries in the district, and bring supplies on the ground. The cost of this work has been £150.

Road, Ring's Bridge to Kapanga Mine.—A portion of this road was washed away by a flood that took place in the month of July, 1883, which silted up the bed of the creek, causing the water to flow over the road in several places. This necessitated the deviation of the creek, to prevent a like occurrence again taking place. The cost of repairs and creek deviation has been £150.

Road, Emily Battery to Rocky Creek.—This work is now in course of construction, but the amount that is available will not be sufficient to complete it. The original estimate was £291; but as this work was not so pressing as some of the other roads in the district, £165 of the estimated amount was apportioned to complete the road from Matawai Battery to Vaughan's Claim. Subsidies for several additional road and tracks in this district have been authorized, and some of them are in progress.

THAMES.—*Road, Otanui Mines to Crushing Battery at Maungawheriwheri Creek.*—The formation of this road is completed, and it is partially metalled; but the soft spongy nature of the ground renders the metalling very expensive. The cost of this work has been £710.

Track, Katikati Road to Waitekauri.—This work consisted in improving the original dray-road, by reducing the grades and replacing culverts. The cost of this work has been £250.

Track, Karangahake.—This track is a continuation of the road that was constructed from the Ohinemuri River to the Karangahake mines; and is for the purpose of enabling the miners to have easy access to this part of the district. The country in this locality is very rough and broken, and likewise densely timbered; and, as it is believed to contain a large amount of auriferous quartz, which could never be worked until a road or track is constructed, it will tend to open up the country between Karangahake and Te Aroha, and enable the miners an opportunity of prospecting—£784 have been expended on this work, and a subsidy of two-thirds the cost of construction, up to £1,333 have been authorised.

Road, Kaueranga Valley to Otanui.—This road was originally partially formed, but never metalled. At the time this work was authorised the quartz mines at Otanui looked very promising, but from defects in the crushing plant, have not yet been properly tested. It was to enable machinery to be easily brought on the ground, that the road was undertaken. The cost of the work has been £357, but it is not yet completed.

Bridge over the Ohinemuri River, Karangahake.—This work is in course of construction. It was originally intended to construct a bridge for passengers; but, subsequently, it was deemed advisable to make it suitable for horse traffic, and a portion of the subsidy authorised for the Karangahake track was appropriated to do this. The estimated cost of the bridge with approaches is £416.

TUAPEKA.—*Road from Waipori Township to Bush.*—This is a road to open up the Waipori bush, which is about twelve miles distant from the Waipori township. It is the only bush in the neighborhood where mining timber can be obtained. The portion of the road on which the money has been spent is from the top of the hill directly above where the bush is situated, and follows down the siding into the bush. The cost of this work has been £200.