

SESS. II.—1891.
NEW ZEALAND.

GOLDFIELDS' ROADS, WATER-RACES, AND OTHER WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH MINING.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

Mr. H. A. GORDON, F.G.S., Inspecting Engineer, to the Hon. R. J. SEDDON, Minister of Mines.
SIR,—

Mines Department, Wellington, 8th June, 1891.

I have the honour to submit my annual report, for the year ending the 31st March last, on the different works undertaken, and constructed either wholly by the Mines Department or by subsidies paid to local bodies, also on the water-races under the control of the department, and, generally, on the development of the mining industry throughout the colony.

The different subjects are classified under the headings "Subsidised Roads and Tracks;" "Grants for the Construction of Roads;" "Schools of Mines;" "Gold- and Silver-mining;" "Quartz-mining;" "Alluvial Mining, including Hydraulic Sluicing and Dredging;" "Gold Quartz;" "Gold-milling;" "Concentration of Low-grade Silver Ores;" "Kidd's Ore-concentrator;" "New Plymouth Oil-boring;" "Explosive Nature of Coal Dust;" "Extract from the Report of the French Royal Commission on the Use of Explosives in Coal-mines;" "Last Examination Papers for Mine-managers' Certificates;" and statistical tables showing the expenditure on works on goldfields.

SUBSIDISED ROADS AND TRACKS (NORTH ISLAND). BAY OF ISLANDS COUNTY.

Road, Tamarere to Puhipuhi.—This is a road to connect Kawakawa with Puhipuhi. Drays can be taken for eight miles out of Kawakawa, *via* Tamarere, and over the table-land to near the Terehunga Gorge. The present subsidy of £205, on the principle of pound for pound, was authorised for the construction of about a mile and a half of road across the Terehunga Gorge to the table-land on the other side; of this amount £110 has been paid.

COROMANDEL COUNTY.

Track, Mercury Bay to Kuaotuna.—This track is in course of construction. It will give facilities to the mining community at Kuaotuna to get their supplies from Mercury Bay. Goods can only be landed at Kuaotuna in fine weather. The cost of the track is estimated at £360, and a subsidy has been authorised to the extent of £180.

Track, Maturanga.—This track is now completed, at a cost of £200, of which amount £100 has been paid as subsidy.

Road, Coromandel to Thames.—The portion of this road where the expenditure was incurred last year is between Wilson's, at the sea-beach, and Tiki Bridge, which now completes the work from Coromandel to the sea-beach. A grant of £1,000 was given towards the construction of the portion of this road between Waikawau and Manaia, and the County Council have expended a further sum of £300; of this amount a subsidy to the extent of £150 has been paid.

THAMES COUNTY.

Road to Sheridan's Mine.—A short length of dray-road was made from the flat to the mine, to enable the proprietor to get his quartz brought away with drays. The cost of the work has amounted to £25, of which sum £12 10s. has been paid as a subsidy.

Road to Bullion Mine.—There is a small crushing-battery erected by the proprietors of the Bullion Mine, on a flat some distance from the mine. A sledge- or trolley-track has been constructed to allow the quartz to be transported to the battery. The cost of the work up to the present time has been £36 5s.; of this amount a subsidy has been paid to the extent of £18 2s. 6d.

Road, Waikomo to Tapu.—This road was originally a horse-track, and recently it has been widened into a dray-road. It was estimated to cost £1,500; of this amount a subsidy was authorised to the extent of £750, the whole of which has been paid. There were numerous slips on the road at the time of my recent visit to this district, so that it could not be utilised for wheel-traffic.

Track, Alabama Creek.—A sledge- or trolley-track has been constructed from the road leading up Hape Creek to some quartz-claims that were taken up near the head of Alabama Creek. The cost of the work was £100, one-half of which was paid as a subsidy.

Road up Tararu Creek.—The road up this creek has been extended for some distance, but the whole of the road is in an almost impassable state, and will require to be metalled before it is fit