

R E P O R T

ON THE

GOLD FIELDS OF OTAGO, NEW ZEALAND.

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF OTAGO TO THE HONORABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Superintendent's Office.

Dunedin, 7th November, 1863.

SIR,—

Herewith I have the honor to forward a Report of the Discovery, Progress, and present condition of the Otago Gold Fields, and to request that His Excellency will be pleased to cause the same to be laid on the table of the General Assembly.

I have also the honor to draw Your Excellency's attention to the circumstance that no action has hitherto been taken, to place the Imperial Government in possession of accurate information respecting the Gold Fields of this Province, so that although upwards of one million ounces of gold have already been reported since the discovery of Tuapeka in 1861, it does not appear that any official recognition of these discoveries has yet been made. The only information which has been accessible to the population of the mother country has been derived from the Colonial press, and principally from that of Australia, which (for obvious reasons) has always endeavoured to represent the Gold Fields of New Zealand as of little value.

It seems, therefore, extremely desirable in the interest of the Colony at large, and of this Province in particular, that the weight of official authority should be given to a reliable account of our Gold Fields, such as I believe to be afforded by the accompanying Report, which has been prepared by Vincent Pyke, Esq., the Secretary to the Gold Fields Department.

Should His Excellency concur with these views, I beg leave to suggest that a copy of this Report may be forwarded to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, together with such remarks thereon as His Excellency may think fit to offer.

I have, &c.,

J. HYDE HARRIS,

Superintendent.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary, Auckland.

VINCENT PYKE, ESQ., TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF OTAGO.

SIR,—

I do myself the honor to forward the following Report on the discovery, progress, condition, and prospects of the Gold Fields of this Province.

I.—PROGRESS OF DISCOVERY.

1. It is difficult to say positively when or by whom gold was first discovered in Otago. That the Maories were aware of its existence before the arrival of the European colonists is an undoubted fact. I have been informed by Mr. Palmer, of Moeraki Bush, that, many years prior to the settlement of the Province, he was assured by the Native Chief Tuawaiki that "plenty firro," or yellow stone, such as that of which the seals of the white men were made, could be