

gold fields of that province for the years 1869, 1870 and 1871. This shows an expenditure for the three years respectively of £28,484 6s., £31,209 4s. 4d., and £27,015 17s. 3d. The appropriation for the present financial year for expenditure within the gold fields amounts, so far as I am able to ascertain from the printed estimates, to the sum of £18,227 10s., for departments of the Provincial Government, including the Wardens; £9,521, for roads and works; £6855, for new works to be paid for in land; making a total of £34,603 10s.

In the County of Westland the expenditure for the last financial year ending June 30th, 1872, was £51,555 11s. 4d., including £5000 repayment of deficiency bills. This whole sum may properly be considered as having been expended within the gold fields. I understand that the estimates are voted half-yearly, and I am, consequently, unable to give, even approximately, the amount proposed to be expended; but it may be presumed that it will not vary essentially from the votes of last year.

In the Province of Nelson I have absolutely no data upon which to base even an approximate estimate of the past or proposed expenditure upon the gold fields by the local Government.

In the Province of Auckland, it appears by the "Comparative Statement of Appropriation and Expenditure" for the year ending December 31, 1872, printed in the Journals of the Council for Session 28, that the sum of £15,739 18s. 3d. was expended within the gold fields; and in the estimates for the present financial year the total votes for gold fields expenditure amount to £24,156.

WATER SUPPLY.

Further papers relative to water supply upon the gold fields, in continuation of those laid before Parliament last session, will be presented, and include copies of the various documents and reports upon which it has been decided by the Government to undertake certain works for the supply of water under Part III of the "Public Works and Immigration Act, 1870." These works are as follows:—

1. In the Province of Auckland, upon the Hauraki gold field, a water race about eleven miles in length, heading from the Kauaeranga River, a little above the junction of the Hibi Creek; constructed to carry forty heads of water, with delivery in the Moanatairi Gully, at 133 feet above the sea level. The cost may be estimated at something under £40,000; and the probable revenue is calculated to more than meet the interest upon this sum, together with all expenses of management and maintenance.
2. In the Province of Nelson, south-west gold fields, a water race to head from Lake Hochstetter and terminate at Paddy's Look Out; length about sixteen miles; constructed to carry 100 heads of water. The approximate cost is estimated at £30,000, and the probable revenue at least £5000 a year.
3. In the Province of Otago, in the Mount Ida mining district, a water race from the Little Kyeburn to the workings above Naseby; the length will probably not exceed fifteen miles, and the cost is estimated by Mr. Warden Robinson at £200 a mile, or £3,000. A main flushing channel for the workings above and about Naseby, which it has been roughly calculated will cost about £8,000.

Full particulars with regard to these works will be found in the "Further Papers" referred to, and, without doubt, reports as to their progress will be presented by the Engineer-in-Chief.

The legislation of last session upon this subject resulted in the adoption in the "Public Works and Immigration Act, 1871" of the recommendation of the Gold Fields Committee expressed in their Interim Report No. 5, which was to the following effect:—

- "1. That this Committee is of opinion that, except in special cases, it is not expedient that the Government should itself undertake the construction and management of works for Water Supply on the gold fields.
- "2. That the amount devoted to the construction of works for Water Supply on the gold fields by 'The Public Works and Immigration Act, 1870,' would be more effectually and advantageously expended in association with private enterprise by advances of one-third of the capital necessary for works carefully considered and approved by the Board of Works, care being taken to protect the public from excessive charges or monopolies, and to secure the payment of interest and the repayment of the principal advanced."

As soon as possible after the session, steps were taken to carry the wishes of Parliament into effect, and a schedule of regulations prescribing the mode of making applications for advance of money to aid in the construction, extension, or improvement of works for the supply of water upon the gold fields, were issued by the Hon. the Minister for Public Works, on January 31, 1872, and in accordance with his instructions, published throughout the colony. A copy of these regulations is appended hereto, and it will be seen on reference to the Report of the Gold Fields Committee (Appendix 1871, H. No. 11), that they are, in the main, identical with those drawn up with the view of a suggestion to the Government by a Sub-Committee consisting of Messrs. Curtis, Harrison and Haughton, and unanimously approved and presented to the House by the Committee.

Up to the present date, so far as I am officially informed, applications for aid by way of subsidy under the regulations have been lodged with the gold fields Wardens' to the amount of £21,850; but I have been made aware that further applications to the amount of £24,000 are in course of preparation, and will, in all probability, be sent in within the present month. Only one advance has, at present, been sanctioned by the Government, viz., £1,533 to the Greenstone and Hohona Water Race Company.

Several applications forwarded by the Wardens' have had to be returned to those officers, in consequence of informality and neglect of compliance with the regulations of January 31, 1872, and the official instructions under Circular No. 43 (L & J 72-24), appended hereto.

It may not, perhaps, be out of place if I should here record my opinion as to the policy adopted in the "Public Works and Immigration Act, 1871" relative to the granting of subsidies to works for water supply; and I have no hesitation in saying that I believe it will prove a success. I use the word "will" advisedly, as I do not consider that sufficient time has yet elapsed to enable a decided judgment