

SUMMARY OF WORKS CONSTRUCTED—*continued.*

Nature of Work.	Total Cost of Construction, or Amount authorised to be expended.	Expenditure, by way of Subsidy or otherwise, by Mines Department.	Amount of Liability by Mines Department on Works in Progress.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
SUMMARY.			
Roads on goldfields	152,706 3 4	139,702 2 11	13,013 18 5
Subsidised roads and tracks	124,073 6 2	70,254 9 8	5,576 10 7
Subsidised roads and tracks other than on goldfields	6,146 9 10	4,759 6 2	..
Prospecting	53,152 12 4	15,713 3 2	1,027 7 11
Water-races	56,847 7 0	55,740 12 2	900 0 0
Wharves	435 15 9	285 15 9	..
Schools of Mines	17,145 11 7	17,145 11 7	..
Drainage-channels	21,401 9 3	14,885 5 3	1,000 0 0
Diamond drills	4,448 9 11	2,706 9 11	..
Treatment of ores	1,342 8 9	742 8 9	..
Tracks to open up mineral lands	325 8 1	325 8 1	..
Artesian well-boring, Maniototo Plains	800 0 0	800 0 0	..
Repairing flood damages	500 0 0	500 0 0	..
	439,325 2 0	323,560 13 5	21,517 16 11

It will be seen from the foregoing statement that the total value of works authorised amounts to £439,325 2s., while the actual expenditure has been £323,560 13s. 5d., during the last twelve years, since votes for this class of works have been under the control of the Hon. Minister of Mines. During the past year works have been authorised to the extent of £33,831 6s. 10d., while the actual payments have amounted to £27,213 2s. 4d., and the liabilities on 31st March last were £21,517 16s. 11d.

Notwithstanding the large amount which has been expended on works in connection with developing the mining industry, a great deal more requires to be done in opening up the back country by the construction of roads and tracks; without these it is impossible for men to carry on prospecting operations systematically. There is still a large area of country comparatively unexplored between Cabbage Bay and Cape Colville, and between the latter place and Port Charles. A little gold has been found near Cabbage Bay, and the same formation, which is of a tufaceous sandstone, extends for a great distance. It is in this formation where the whole of the rich lodes in the North Island are found. It is said by some that there is not the same class of miners in the colony now, as there were in the early days, to carry on prospecting operations in the back country; but it must be remembered that in the early days of the goldfields money was far more plentiful than at the present time. The most of those who followed the goldfield in the early days were single men, having no ties to keep them in one spot other than that of good-fellowship amongst one another; with money in their pocket, and a great desire to open up a new field, prospecting was carried on with the hope that some rich find would be discovered to pay them for their labours.

In those days very few of the miners had much knowledge concerning the character of the rocks where payable lodes would likely be found, and this led to prospecting operations being carried on everywhere, without regard to locality. Indeed, it was looked on as a matter of pure chance as to what formation gold would be found in. There is no doubt if money were as plentiful now as it was in the early days, many of our young men would be equally as eager to search for fresh fields, and, with their knowledge of minerals and character of rocks where auriferous lodes are likely to exist, they probably would be more successful in making new discoveries. At the present time many of the young men have their parents to support, and, with only earning small wages, they can neither afford the means nor the time to devote to prospecting, especially to go out in the unexplored wilds, where tent, tools, and provisions must all be carried on men's backs. When the country is opened up by pack-tracks or roads it becomes an easy matter to test ground, and men can readily be got to carry on prospecting operations as the expense of getting provisions is not high.

The whole of the Hauraki Peninsula is suitable for nothing but mining. The land is not fit for agricultural purposes; nevertheless it contains riches which will support a large mining population for many years. In every place in the colony where gold-mining is the paramount industry, every encouragement should be given to get the mineral wealth developed; by so doing assistance is given to an agricultural population, to cultivate small portions of available land to supply the wants of those engaged in mining. They can realise a much higher price for their produce in the back country where mining is carried on than in the large centres of civilisation.

The west coast of the Middle Island is purely a mining locality, although there are small portions of it which are suitable for agriculture. The greater portion of it is only suitable for mining; and it is only by a large mining population being on the West Coast that any people have been induced to take up and cultivate small areas of land. Were it not for mining, it would never pay any settler to grow produce. He could never compete with the farmers in Canterbury and Otago. Those who have been engaged in mining, and who have raised their families on the West Coast, are anxious to take up small plots of land so that they can make permanent homes; by combining this with mining, they are able to earn a livelihood; and it is only by this means that the West Coast can support a large population. There are no doubt large areas of fine forest, which will in time be utilised, and afford employment to a considerable number of persons; but were the gold-mining industry to fail, many of those who are now engaged in the timber trade would have to leave and seek employment elsewhere.

The coal trade on the West Coast is gradually increasing; but the harbours are not completed to such an extent that large vessels can take away the coal to foreign markets to compete successfully with those engaged in this trade in other countries; and yet we have coal which cannot be