1899.

NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS OF WARDENS AND OTHER OFFICERS ON GOLDFIELDS.

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

No. 1.

Mr. Warden BUSH to the UNDER-SECRETARY for MINES, Wellington.

Warden's Office, Thames, 3rd July, 1899.

SIR,—

I have the honour to furnish herewith the usual annual report on the Hauraki Goldfields.

It affords me very great pleasure to report a considerable increase in the yield of gold for the year ending December, 1898, and in proof of this I beg you to note the following figures: The Waihi Mine produced gold of the value of £272,688, as against £134,553 in 1897; the Waitekauri, £66,585, as against £50,528 in 1897; the New Zealand Crown Mines, £55,483, as against £41,120 in 1897; while the Talisman came in with £32,648, the Komata Reefs with £17,795, and the Woodstock £15,692. This company has been somewhat unfortunate in the difficulty it has met with in its extractions, which has considerably interfered with their returns for the year. Notwithstanding this difficulty, which I understand has now been overcome, this mine, up to the end of 1898, is stated to have yielded gold to the value of £90,854. The Moanataiari Company and its tributers obtained £8,432; the May Queen (Hauraki) Company and tributers, £6,131; the Waiotahi, £4,571; the Mahara Royal, £4,236; and the Tararu Creek, £8,985.

In the Coromandel district the Hauraki Company obtained bullion valued at £16,545, as against £23,343 in 1897; the Royal Oak, £12,942, as against £24,441 in 1897; the Kapanga obtained £7,631, as against £5,695 in 1897; and the Hauraki Associated, £3,850.

There are several other mines in various parts of the field which are producing gold, but these, with the exception of the Waihi-Silverton, are the chief producers. This latter obtained gold to the value of £11,501 during the same period. The result of this has been greater vigour in development works, and the erection of additional crushing-power. Under the circumstances, a great increase in the gold return for the current year may reasonably be expected.

There are several small batteries either completed or in the course of erection on various portions of the field.

The permanency of the mines referred to seems to be established, and I have no doubt in time some of the mines which are at present plodding along will in the near future turn out gold-producers.

Vast sums have been spent in machinery of all descriptions, and in the construction of water-races. A very great amount of development work has been carried on during the year all over the field.

In the immediate neighbourhood of the Thames the work of testing the low levels for new runs of gold has not yet been commenced, the erection of the new pumping plant at the Thames-Hauraki Company's Mine, which is to enable the pumping of water to be carried out at as low a depth as 2,000 ft. below the sea-level, having occupied a much longer period of time than was thought would have been the case, owing to unfortunate delays occurring in the supply of portions of the machinery. This plant is now completed, and was opened on the 21st December last.

The work of testing the deep levels is one of great importance to this portion of the field, as upon the ultimate success of developing at greater depths than as yet have been obtained new and payable seams of gold depends to a large extent the future prosperity of this district. The importance of the work cannot be overestimated, for when one thinks of the rich runs of gold that have been discovered from time to time in the upper levels, and of the fact that in many instances payable gold has been left underfoot on account of the difficulty experienced in working the lodes, owing to the prevalence of water in large quantities, then the possibilities of the Thames as a gold-producer are more than of an ordinary character. The pump in question is capable of lifting