

country; but they should render every assistance in their power to promote exploration. This assistance can be rendered—

1. By publishing geographical maps showing the districts in which metals are most likely to occur.
2. By making roads and bridle-tracks in mining districts.
3. By offering rewards for the discovery of metallic lodes.
4. By framing regulations that will enable miners to test and work the new-found lodes as easily and cheaply as possible, and that will also afford inducements for the men to settle permanently in the district.

With regard to the first, little need be said. The maps should each embrace districts of 500 or 600 square miles, and should be on a scale of two miles to an inch, which is sufficiently large to enable the miner to find out with tolerable accuracy his position on it, and yet small enough to be easily carried. The maps should show the physical features of the country, and on them should be marked all the places where metals have already been found. An index map of the Colony, on a much smaller scale, should also be published, showing the relative positions of the various districts.

With regard to the second, all those districts known to be metalliferous should have bridle-tracks cut from them in different directions for several miles, so as to encourage the extension of the district. When a new discovery was made, a properly qualified officer should inspect it; and if he reported that there were good chances of its proving a payable mine, a dray-road should at once be made to it: the general principle to be kept in mind being that the Government should help all new but hopeful undertakings, for as soon as a mine or district has been proved to be rich, it may be safely left alone, as private enterprise is sure then to do all that is required for it—probably better and more expeditiously than the Government could possibly do it; while, on the other hand, a rich, but unproved mine, if difficult of access, may easily languish and die for want of a little fostering aid from the Government, and perhaps a whole district may be thus abandoned and forgotten, instead of forming a flourishing town. If, however, it was found that private enterprise was not forthcoming to construct important works, the Government would be husbanding its resources and developing the energies of the country far more by guaranteeing a small dividend for a certain number of years, than by undertaking the construction of the works themselves.

With reference to the third point, paying exploring parties is open to several objections which the system of rewards is free from. Paid men, with no one to look after them, are apt to get indolent, and not to prospect the ground thoroughly; while, on the other hand, the expenses of an expedition are often too great for poor men to undertake, and a party of miners might be quite willing to go out for a three months' prospecting tour, but could not afford to do so. Perhaps this difficulty might be met by giving the reward to the payer of the party, leaving him to make his own arrangements with the men. In this way I believe many parties would be fitted out by storekeepers and others in mining districts, and the country would gradually get well explored. The rewards should not be excessive, but sufficiently large to stimulate research. Perhaps £500 for a gold-bearing reef, and £250 for one of silver, copper, lead, mercury, zinc, or tin, if more than twenty miles from any known mining district, and proportionately less if nearer, would be ample. On a discovery being reported, a Government officer should visit the spot, and if he pronounces it a true metalliferous vein or lode, with a fair prospect of proving remunerative when worked, the reward should be paid at once, without any condition as to its ultimately turning out payable; the fact of having proved that metals exist in that district being well worth the amount of the reward. I have not included coal with the metals, as I do not think that coal mining has sufficient attractions for diggers. It has but little speculation in it, and the bulk of coal is so large in proportion to its value, that it is only when near water communication or in settled districts that it could be worked to advantage.

The fourth point is the one that presents the most difficulty. Vein mining is a very different operation from alluvial washing, and takes both time and money to develop. I believe, however, that if accurate and reliable reports of the discoveries were published by the Government, and it were to render assistance by making roads, there would be no want of private capital for working any promising lode; and the Government should take care that the regulations were so framed as to afford every facility for labour and capital combining to work the mines by Joint Stock Companies. It would, however, be quite out of place here to enlarge upon this point, notwithstanding its importance, as it hardly comes within the scope of the essay, and I will only remark that, when framing these regulations, the experience gained at the Thames should be well considered.

The inducements that the Government could hold out to men to settle permanently down in mining districts are—

1. Selling to miners, or other *bonâ fide* settlers in the district, all land which is capable of being cultivated. If metals were reserved, there would be no necessity for keeping land from sale until it had been proved; and as in mining districts agricultural land is generally scarce, all that is available should be sold, but in small blocks and to different purchasers, and the immediate cultivation of it should be one of the conditions of purchase. The surrounding country might be leased or sold for runs—metals being in all cases reserved.
2. The establishment of schools. No greater inducement can be offered to married men to settle than the certainty of being able to educate their children near home; and this applies to other districts as well as mining ones.
3. The forming of savings banks in each district, so that the miners may have a safe and easy means of investing their earnings, instead of spending them at once in the public-house.

Both these things are very important, and no discouragement at first should induce the Government to close either the one or the other, for although neither schools nor banks may be much used at first a change will slowly but surely come, and that change will accurately mark and measure the growing inclination for a settled life arising in the population of the district.