

1878.
NEW ZEALAND.

JACKSON'S BAY SPECIAL SETTLEMENT

(FURTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO).

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

No. 1.

MR. PATTEN to the UNDER SECRETARY for IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

Hokitika, 19th August, 1878.

I have the honor to forward herewith the annual report of the Resident Agent on the special settlement at Jackson's Bay, up to the 30th June, 1878.

As the report is very comprehensive, there is little need for me to comment on it; but I should like to remark that, taking all the circumstances into consideration, and the great difficulties that had to be encountered in the formation of the settlement, it may now be fairly assumed that the object for which it was originally intended has been attained.

Notwithstanding the difficult nature of the country, and the class of immigrants located there, the Resident Agent, by his energy and perseverance, has brought the settlement to that condition that it can now be fairly left (with one or two exceptions, to which I shall presently allude) to maintain itself without any further Government aid. Of course, amongst some of the settlers, there exists a feeling of discontent, and a desire to make things as unpleasant as possible; but such a feeling is unavoidable in a settlement of this description, where men of so many different nationalities have been brought together. Out of mere trifles things have been magnifying into matters of importance, and complaints have been lodged against the Resident Agent, which, on investigation, could not be substantiated. I consider that Mr. Macfarlane, through the whole of the trying time he has been in charge of the settlement, has evinced a spirit to deal fairly with all classes, and whatever complaints have been made have not been owing to any action on the part of the Resident Agent, but have been occasioned by the settlers themselves.

With regard to the settlement being in future independent of Government aid, the fact of such a harbour being accessible for sailing vessels, and the large extent of bush country available for saw-milling purposes, has led to the erection of a saw-mill by private enterprise at the Arawata River, the plant for which has been conveyed by a sailing vessel from Hokitika, and landed and placed in position by the aid of the settlers, some of whom are shareholders in the mill. The masters of sailing vessels who have called in at the Bay speak in favourable terms of it as a port; and a vessel called the "Jane Ann Andersen," capable of carrying 250,000 feet of sawn timber, has been chartered to convey the first order that is being cut by the saw-mill for the market. There is every probability of other mills being erected shortly, and a large timber trade carried on for years.

Quite recently, alluvial gold, in pieces of between one and two ounces in weight, have been found in the district, and a very fine parcel of gold was received by the Union Bank of Australia per s.s. "Maori," on her last trip. It was obtained in the neighbourhood of the Haast River. No doubt a rich gold field will be developed in time. The country between the Haast and the Paringa River is looked upon as being very rich in minerals.

The completion of the existing contracts, and the construction of the Paringa and Haast Track will afford employment for such of the settlers who are not otherwise engaged, and the breeding of cattle and farming will occupy the attention of others. About twenty men are employed at the saw-mill.

The completion of a jetty at the Bay is a work that is alluded to by Mr. Macfarlane as being one of vital importance to the district, and, as a chain of it has already been constructed, I hope that the completion of it may be favourably considered. That it will not be exposed to such violent action of the sea as was imagined, the evidence of masters of steamers and sailing vessels who have lain there during heavy weather will confirm. Moreover, as the Resident Agent, during his residence of three and