

1888.

NEW ZEALAND.

# GOLD-DISCOVERY AT MAHAKIPAWA

(REPORT ON), BY THE INSPECTING ENGINEER, MINES DEPARTMENT.

*Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. G. F. Richardson, with Leave of the House.*

The INSPECTING ENGINEER, Mines Department, to the UNDER-SECRETARY of MINES.

(Memorandum.)

Mines Department, Wellington, 3rd August, 1888.

IN accordance with your instructions I visited the locality of the recent gold-discovery at Mahakipawa, and have now the honour to report on the same as follows:—

## DISCOVERY OF GOLD.

The gold was discovered by Charles Jackson, who first commenced to prospect the Mahakipawa Creek about the middle of January last, and was subsequently joined by Matthew Patterson, William Campbell, Hugh Patterson, and James Norton, whom I will term in this report "the prospectors." They found good prospects of gold in crevices and pot-holes in the rock at the side of the creek, using the tin dish. After prospecting in the creek in this manner for some time, they got some boards to make sluice-boxes, in order to work the ground in a more systematic manner. They had to carry these boards from the Mahakipawa Arm of the Pelorus Sound, a distance of nearly five miles, and, in order that they might not be observed, they carried them over the open flat at night and "planted" them in the bush at the mouth of the gorge, being able to carry them through the bush in the day-time without attracting attention; but before they were able to get the boards up as far as the ground they intended working they were traced by two men, and it was then that they at once informed the Warden at Picton of the discovery they had made. This was on the 23rd of May, and up to that time 1oz. 16dwt. of gold was all they had obtained—by washing with the tin dish.

## SITUATION OF PROSPECTORS' CLAIM.

The prospectors' claim is situated about two miles up the Mahakipawa Creek from the head of the flat held as freehold by Mr. Cullen. The creek-bed all through the gorge is very narrow, and full of large quartzose-schist boulders, with a steep sideling all the way from the top of the range down to the creek. The creek-bed varies in width from about 12ft. to 20ft., and the depth of drift-shingle or gravel on the bed-rock also varies according to the fall of the creek: in some places there is not more than 4ft., and in others as much as 12ft. The large quantity of water in the creek where the prospectors' claim is situated, during the winter months, renders working it a difficult undertaking, for every flood fills up the workings level with the natural bed of the creek.

Owing to a heavy flood which took place on Saturday last, the 28th ultimo, and which not only filled up all the prospectors' workings, but carried away their sluice-boxes, all operations in the creek were suspended at the time of my visit, and there was no opportunity of prospecting the wash-drift lying near the bed-rock. The prospectors, however, informed me that they got about 12oz. of gold in cutting a tail-race to work their ground, but had not got their claim properly opened out when the flood referred to destroyed all their work.

## EXTENT OF GROUND.

The area in which payable prospects of gold have been obtained extends from a little above the mouth of the gorge in the main creek to near the head of the right-hand or south-western branch, a distance of nearly four miles. In this distance there are twenty-two claims from which payable prospects have been obtained—namely, ten claims in the main creek, including that of the prospectors, and twelve in the south-western branch; there is also one claim on the sideling above the prospectors' claim, and one claim in the eastern branch, where payable prospects have been obtained.

The main creek, as already indicated, divides into two branches, the junction being about 420 yards above the prospectors' claim. One branch goes towards the south-west, and the other winds round in an easterly direction to a saddle which divides the Mahakipawa Creek from the head-waters of the Ada River. The eastern branch has a much greater depth of drift-shingle and gravel on the bed-rock than either the main creek or the right-hand branch, and only one claim in this branch has yet been bottomed.