

minerals were produced, representing a value of £398,139, as against a value of £389,018 for the previous year, and the production of kauri-gum was 8,338 tons, having a value of £404,567, as against 8,317 tons for the former year, which had a value of £510,775.

The quantities and value of the mineral productions for the year were: Gold £221,615oz., value £887,839; silver 54,177oz., value £6,697; antimony ore 44 tons, value £761; manganese ore 534 tons, value £1,156; mixed minerals 25 tons, value £353; colonial coal, exported, including that which was used in coaling direct steamers to England, 75,004 tons, value £73,438; coke, exported, 107 tons, value £160; colonial coal consumed in New Zealand 644,542 tons, value £322,271; and kauri-gum 8,338 tons, value 404,567—making the total value of the production last year £1,697,242, as against £1,822,674 for the previous year.

The total value of gold, silver, and other minerals, including kauri-gum, produced in the colony to the end of 1894, was £62,769,652.

#### GOLD-MINING.

Notwithstanding the decrease in the yield of gold last year the present state of the mines shows that the gold-mining industry is likely in the future to be greatly extended. The large demand for New Zealand mines as an investment for foreign capital is the means whereby properties, in which mining operations have for several years been suspended, owing to the want of money to develop them; can be again taken up. Fresh ground is also being applied for to carry on more extensive prospecting operations than hitherto, and money is forthcoming to assist to a far greater extent than heretofore in developing our mineral resources. Every encouragement will be afforded those who wish to invest their capital in mining ventures to carry on their operations in a *bonâ fide* manner; but, at the same time, safeguards will be provided to prevent large areas of mineral lands being held for purely speculative purposes.

The recent discoveries of auriferous lodes in the Reefton District at deeper levels than hitherto worked have given an impulse to mining in that locality, as these discoveries have demonstrated the fact that new lodes containing ore of a payable character for working will be found at great depths, to take the place of the lodes carried down from the surface but which have cut out. Many mines which have been given up as valueless will now be tested to far greater depths than heretofore, and by judicious management they will yet be made to yield returns which, I feel confident, will fully recompense the owners for their outlay.

The quantity of gold entered for exportation through the Customs for the year ending the 31st of March last—as shown in Table No. 2 annexed—was 222,981oz., representing a value of £889,545, while the quantity exported for the same period of the previous year was 240,702oz., valued at £970,220. This shows a decrease last year of 17,721oz.; but this does not in reality show the total production, as there is a certain quantity of gold manufactured into jewellery in the colony. Of the quantity exported, Auckland contributed 58,029oz.; Marlborough, 1,911oz.; Nelson, 1,633oz.; West Coast, 85,015oz.; and Otago, 76,393oz. The only district in which there was an increase was Auckland, the export being 5,603oz. more than for the previous year, while in other districts the decreases were as follow: Marlborough, 351oz.; Nelson, 546oz.; West Coast, 13,915oz.; and Otago, 8,512oz. Of the total quantity exported last year Auckland contributed 26·02 per cent.; Marlborough, 0·89 per cent.; Nelson, 0·73 per cent.; West Coast, 38·13 per cent.; and Otago, 34·27 per cent.

#### EARNINGS OF THE GOLD-MINERS.

If we estimate the earnings of the men employed in gold-mining on the same basis of computation as adopted in former years—namely, the value of the gold entered for exportation, divided by the number of miners on the different goldfields as returned by the Mining Registrars, we can but approximately reckon the net receipts of the men. The cost of tools and interest on the