

Product.	Quantity.	Value. £
Gold ... ..	251,645 oz.	980,204
Silver ... ..	183,892 "	20,872
Antimony-ore ... ..	10 tons	157
Copper-ore ... ..	...	2
Manganese-ore ... ..	180 "	541
Mixed minerals ... ..	1,561 "	5,892
Colonial coal exported, including that used by Home steamers ... ..	76,073 "	69,595
Coke exported ... ..	...	...
Colonial coal consumed in New Zealand ... ..	764,640 "	382,320
Kauri-gum ... ..	6,641 "	398,010
Total value of production for 1897 ... ..	...	1,857,593
" " 1896 ... ..	...	1,914,241
Total decrease ... ..	...	<u>£56,648</u>

The total value of the gold, silver, coal, and other minerals, including kauri-gum, exported up to the end of 1897 was £68,617,177.

#### GOLD-MINING.

The works connected with the production of gold, on which large sums of money have been expended by companies, are, in many instances, unfinished, or only so lately completed that returns from the mines have not yet made any material addition to the yields from the quartz-mines in both islands.

The unfinished state of some of the works in connection with hydraulic sluicing, and the scarcity of water consequent on the exceptionally dry season in Otago, will, in a great measure, account for the shrinkage in the yield from this source.

As a result of the plants already in operation the yield from many of the mines and claims has been augmented; and with the additional appliances contemplated the returns of gold and silver will in future, it may reasonably be anticipated, be not only maintained but considerably increased.

Many of the claims which have been taken up, especially for quartz-mining, were submitted to the public with glowing reports from so-called mining experts, with the result that the mining industry has been blamed for the misdirection and loss of capital. The chief cause of the disappointment, however, lies in the fact that too much credence was placed in the reports of inexperienced and unscrupulous persons.

Due regard for security of tenure has been shown in affording protection and concessions to claim-holders and companies who have given proof of their intention to carry on systematic operations, but the owners who have failed to do so have only themselves to blame if the land is thrown back into the goldfield for others to occupy.

The quantity of gold entered for exportation through the Customs for the year ending 31st March last, as shown in Table No. 2 annexed, was 251,492 oz., representing a value of £976,198; while the quantity exported for the same period of the preceding year was 256,913 oz., valued at £1,015,742. This shows a decrease of 5,421 oz., which has arisen in the mining districts of the Middle Island, the returns for the Auckland District showing an increase. Of the quantity exported, Auckland contributed 108,490 oz., Marlborough 619 oz., Nelson and West Coast 66,879 oz., and Otago 75,504 oz.

#### QUARTZ WORKINGS.

The yield of gold from this source compares favourably with last year's returns, although there has been in the North a falling-off from the mines at Coromandel and the Thames, made up, however, by a large increase from the Ohinemuri district.

The Reef-ton returns are only slightly less, whilst the returns from the Morning Star at Preservation Inlet, and from the Glenrock, show a decided increase in the yield for the Otago Mining District.