The construction of dredges, which had to be suspended during the war years, still remains in abeyance owing to the changed conditions brought about by the war, in particular the cost of erecting and equipping a dredge, which has increased enormously from the pre-war figure.

The future of the gold-mining industry now depends mainly on large-scale dredges capable of handling heavy and relatively deep low-grade ground. It is of interest that seven dredges of this type—five on the west coast and two in Otago—were responsible for the production of 64,020 oz., considerably more than half of the total gold production for the year. There was again no prospecting activity in the search for new dredging areas, but some resumption of this type of prospecting is to be expected in the ensuing years in such areas as have no potential agricultural or pastoral value.

During 1946, 224,341 oz. of silver, valued at £59,707, were produced, as compared with 244,544 oz., valued at £36,752, during 1945. While there was a decrease in quantity, the value increased appreciably owing to the increase in the price of silver during the year. Practically the whole silver output of New Zealand is produced from the Martha Mine, and the increased price of silver has been of considerable value to this company in their gold-mining activities.

The following table shows the production of the principal quartz-mines, dredges, and alluvial mines for the year ended 31st December, 1946. These producers contributed, in the aggregate, 99 per cent. of the total production of gold and silver in the Dominion :—

	Ore, in Tons.	Development, in Feet.		Men employed.	Gold (Ounces).	Silver (Ounces).	£(N.Z.).
Quartz-mines							
Martha	107,845	5,285		481	28,533	222,264	364,928
Blackwater	21,548	1,711·5		131	7,426	..	79,408
	Yardage.	Acreage.	Average Depth, in Feet.	Men employed.			
Dredges							
Grey River	4,572,202	89·323	31·7	30	8,131	218	87,114
Kanieri	2,676,046	38·32	42·8	43	13,084	467	140,214
Ngahere	2,343,596	15·251	95·2	27	8,276	102	87,258
Austral N.Z.	3,407,000	49·50	49·00	47	10,360	513	111,600
Clutha	2,114,000	19·00	68·20	28	6,556	..	68,218
Rimu	1,910,522	27·08	43·7	39	8,470	320	90,765
Snowy River	1,152,000	37·00	19·25	13	3,969	..	40,081
Marsden	1,550,517	47·50	29·75	16	3,002	..	30,578
Atarau	1,348,103	56·00	19·75	16	2,775	..	28,293
Redjacks	1,110,130	39·00	21·00	16	2,513	..	25,260
Blackball Creek	..	..	37·50	12	1,260	..	12,150
Slab Hut	700,000	..	16·00	10	1,108	..	10,824
Callaghans	112,231	..	..	13	363	..	3,442
Gillespies	..	..	..	2	34	..	521
Rainbow	..	..	..	2	185	..	1,876
Arahura	3,437,000	28·23	75·4	44	9,143	306	97,974
Alluvial Mines							
Round Hill	..	..	..	..	480	..	4,728
Addison's Flat	..	..	..	..	210	..	2,158
Moonlight	..	..	..	..	26	..	276
Golden Sands	..	..	..	..	576	..	5,145
Waitahu	..	..	..	..	226	..	2,428
Totals	..	..	..	..	116,706	224,190	1,295,239