

EXPENDITURE ON SCHOOLS OF MINES.

The following table shows the expenditure by the Government on schools of mines since their inauguration, exclusive of subsidies paid to the University of Otago towards the School of Mines in connection with that institution :—

Financial Years.	Subsidies towards the Erection of Schools of Mines, and Maintenance.	Chemicals and Apparatus, also Mineralogical Specimens supplied to Schools of Mines.	Scholarships.	Salaries of Teachers, and Travelling-expenses, &c.	Total Sum paid by the Department towards the Schools of Mines.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1885-86 ...	...	36 19 9	...	1,223 9 10	1,260 9 7
1886-87 ...	257 16 6	409 1 4	...	2,716 9 3	3,383 7 1
1887-88 ...	253 15 9	253 14 1	...	1,714 9 6	2,221 19 4
1888-89 ...	42 10 0	6 12 9	...	1,139 4 1	1,188 6 10
1889-90 ...	142 2 0	181 14 10	...	716 3 10	1,040 0 8
1890-91 ...	217 6 6	54 8 0	...	620 9 9	892 4 3
1891-92 ...	181 14 0	...	...	689 5 9	870 19 9
1892-93 ...	312 3 4	...	...	670 1 0	982 4 4
1893-94 ...	197 0 5	...	...	858 19 4	1,055 19 9
1894-95 ...	390 0 0	45 10 10	...	773 17 8	1,209 8 6
1895-96 ...	820 0 0	...	50	849 3 0	1,719 3 0
1896-97 ...	352 14 11	58 18 6	100	834 12 8	1,346 6 1
1897-98 ...	1,089 18 6	29 19 9	100	780 19 0	2,000 17 3
1898-99 ...	740 15 2	32 19 7	50	729 10 11	1,553 5 8
1899-1900 ...	990 3 4	24 3 8	50	52 16 3	1,117 3 3
Totals ...	5,988 0 5	1,134 3 1	350	14,369 11 10	21,841 15 4

The above statement shows the amount expended on the different schools of mines throughout the colony; but, in addition to this, the sum of £8,053 6s. 2d. has to be added, as that has been paid to the School of Mines attached to the University of Otago, £750 being paid last year towards maintaining the school, which makes the total expenditure up to the 31st March last to be £29,895 1s. 6d. This expenditure has extended over a period of fifteen years.

GOLD- AND SILVER-PRODUCTION.

The several branches of mining for precious metals have been steadily prosecuted throughout the year.

In the North Island reef- or lode-mining is the only type represented, and the bullion obtained in many instances is in the form of gold combined with silver; but in the West Coast and southern mining districts (Middle Island) every class of mining-work is in vogue where gold is to be got, and comprises the labours of the solitary digger with his cradle or sluice-box, beach-combing, ground-paddock, tunnelling, ground-sluicing, hydraulic sluicing and elevating, and dredging rivers and auriferous flats for alluvial gold, whilst quartz reefs or lodes are not neglected. Rapid advances have been made in dredge-mining during the year; in fact, it may be said that quite a boom has been, and is being, experienced. Many really good claims have been put on the market, and the success which has attended the operations of the greater number of working-dredges, and the rich harvests won by them, have caused an excited demand for properties of this kind. Investors would do well to thoroughly satisfy themselves as to the *bona fide* character of any claims put before them. When this precaution has been taken, and investigations have proved satisfactory, there is probably no branch of gold-mining which offers so secure a field for investment. The subject will be more fully treated under its own heading.

The following comparative statement shows the quantity and value of gold entered for exportation for the last two years :—

Name of District.	Year ended 31st March, 1899.		Year ended 31st March, 1900.		Increase for 1900.	Decrease for 1900.
	Oz.	Value.	Oz.	Value.	Oz.	Oz.
Auckland ...	148,183	£ 545,463	168,836	£ 625,207	20,653	...
Marlborough ...	621	2,406	344	1,382	...	277
Nelson ...	1,720	6,882	2,589	10,251	869	...
West Coast ...	74,700	298,824	94,081	376,076	19,381	...
Otago ...	78,289	315,306	126,791	513,341	48,502	...
Canterbury ...	12	49	22	87	10	...
Totals ...	303,525	1,168,930	392,663	1,526,344	89,138	...