

1901.
NEW ZEALAND.

MINES STATEMENT.

BY THE HON. JAMES MCGOWAN, MINISTER OF MINES.

MR. SPEAKER,—

It is again my duty to submit my annual Statement to Parliament. In doing so, it gives me much pleasure to remark on the continued and growing importance of the mining industry, which, taken as a whole, and judged from a productive standpoint, may be said to be generally satisfactory, and no small factor in the advancement of the colony.

From causes which will be referred to further on, it will be seen that the output of gold and silver for the year 1900 was rather less than that of the preceding year, but as against this there was a decided increase in the production of other minerals, and, notwithstanding the decrease in the output of precious metals for the time being, the actual value of the mineral production for 1900 was in excess of that of the year 1899. The several branches of mining will be referred to under their respective headings.

MINERAL PRODUCTION.

The annexed Table No. 1 shows the quantity of gold, silver, coal, and other minerals, including kauri-gum, produced during the year ending 31st December, 1900. The total production of gold and silver was 700,073 oz., valued at £1,478,481, and shows a decrease in value of £75,530 as compared with the unusually large production of the preceding year.

The output of other minerals, including coal and lignite, has been 1,106,484 tons, representing a value of £1,224,666, or 118,672 tons, value £122,123, in excess of the previous year. Kauri-gum to the amount of 10,159 tons, valued at £622,293, was obtained. Compared with the production of the previous year this shows a decrease of 957 tons, but an increased value of £14,374.

The quantities and values of the chief mineral productions for the past two years are summarised for comparison as follow:—

Product.	Year ending 31st December, 1900.		Year ending 31st December, 1899.	
	Quantity.	Value. £	Quantity.	Value. £
Gold	373,616 oz.	1,439,602	389,558 oz.	1,513,173
Silver	326,457 "	38,879	349,338 "	40,838
Copper-ore	12 tons.	45	...	...
Antimony	3 "	101	...	...
Manganese-ore	166 "	588	135 tons.	407
Mixed minerals	2,126 "	12,751	1,309 "	6,591
Chrome-ore	28 "	110	...	...
Colonial coal exported, including that used by Home steamers	112,707 "	98,136	89,480 "	83,085
Coke exported ... ..	...	...	18 "	9
Colonial coal consumed in New Zealand	981,283 "	490,642	885,754 "	404,532
Kauri-gum	10,159 "	622,293	11,116 "	607,919
Total value of production for 1900 ... ..	...	2,703,147	...	2,656,554
" " 1899 ... ..	...	2,656,554	...	...
Total increase ... ..	...	£46,593	...	...