

actual increase in the value of the general mineral production. The increase in the value of gold entered for export during the nine months ended the 30th September last was £174,528 over the value for the similar period of 1900, and it is expected that the results for the whole year will equal, if they do not exceed, those for 1899, which were the highest for the previous twenty-six years.

For the first time the output of coal and lignite has exceeded 1,000,000 tons, the actual output for 1900 being 1,093,990 tons.

The quantity of gold entered for export during 1900 was 373,616 oz., valued at £1,439,602, and of silver, 326,457 oz., valued at £38,879; as compared with 389,558 oz. of gold, valued at £1,513,173, and of silver 349,338 oz., valued at £40,838, for 1899, being a decrease of 15,942 oz. of gold, valued at £73,571, and 22,881 oz. of silver, valued at £1,959.

The Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the question of proclaiming rivers in the Middle Island to be watercourses into which tailings and mining *débris* may be discharged under the provisions of the Mining Acts has completed its labours, and the report has been presented to Parliament. A settlement of the claims of the farmers is gradually being arrived at on the basis of the recommendations of the Commission, and it is expected that before long most of them will be adjusted, and that many of the rivers which have been reported on will be proclaimed.

The amount expended last financial year on works for the development of the goldfields was £15,907, while the liabilities amounted to £2,011. It is proposed to take a vote of £50,000 for the current year.

#### TELEGRAPH EXTENSION.

The expenditure under this head was £50,101, which includes £14,016 for new exchanges and additions to existing exchanges.

The new exchanges opened were:—Wellington District: Pahiatua and Woodville. Dunedin District: Edendale, Lumsden, Ngapara, Riverton, Waikouaiti, and Wyndham.

Trunk wires connecting the following exchanges have been erected:—Wellington District: Marton and Wanganui; Pahiatua and Palmerston North. Canterbury District: Timaru and Fairlie. Dunedin District: Invercargill and Wyndham; Invercargill and Riverton; Main line and Waikouaiti; Winton and Lumsden; Wyndham and Edendale.

The total number of subscribers at the end of the financial year was 8,210.

The most important extensions to new districts were:—Auckland District: Dargaville to Tangiteroria; Howick to Motuihi Island; Kaukapakapa to Makarau; Ohaeawai to Pakaraka; Kaihu to Aranga. Wellington District: Strathmore to Whangamomona; Greenmeadows to Taradale and Meeanee; Alfredton to Pongaroa; Rongotea to Glen Oroua. Nelson District: Westport to Mokihinui Mine; ferry wires at Haast and Arawata Rivers. Canterbury District: Christchurch to Port Levy; Christchurch to Gebbie's Flat; Waimate to Waihao Downs. Dunedin District: Duntroon to Maerewhenua; Georgetown to Ikawai; Georgetown to Borton's; Ranfurly to Wedderburn; Heriot to Dunrobin; Invercargill to Waimahaka; Riverton to Gummies' Bush.

Additional accommodation to existing lines has been provided by the erection of wires:—Auckland District: Auckland to Mahoenui; Whangarei to Kawakawa. Wellington District: Wanganui to Mahoenui; Wellington to Dannevirke. Nelson District: Nelson to Blenheim; Reefton to Greymouth. Dunedin District: Lawrence to Clyde; Invercargill to Gore.

The vote asked for this year is £40,489, and provides for new exchanges, additions to existing exchanges, additional wire accommodation, and extensions to new districts.

#### PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

The expenditure upon our public buildings again showed an increase over the previous year, though the increase was not large, being only £11,306—namely, £5,937 under the Public Works Fund, and £5,369 under the Consolidated Fund. The appropriations proposed for the current year amount to