

MINING-DEVELOPMENT.

Our present legislation practically prevents advances being made by the State-guaranteed Advances Board for the development of mining enterprises. Several applications for advances were received during the year, but all had to be reluctantly refused owing to the legal objections referred to. That there are many excellent mining ventures worthy of State financial assistance is invariably admitted. I propose to submit legislation for the consideration of honourable members this session in order to remove the existing legal obstruction.

ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS.

The new regulations for controlling the installation and use of electricity in mines appear to be working smoothly, and to be giving satisfaction to both mine-managers and employees.

CONCLUSION.

In concluding my review of the mining industry it is satisfactory to inform honourable members that never in its history were its prospects more promising than they are at present; it is, however, essential that generous assistance and fostering care should be given in developing our mineral resources.

This industry has since 1853 contributed approximately £108,000,000 to our national wealth, and no better investment is open to the people of this Dominion than granting reasonable assistance in extending prospecting-tracks into the wood-clad practically impenetrable ranges and gorges in which a large portion of our mineral resources are located; every encouragement should also be granted to the prospector and the pioneer miner in their arduous and strenuous efforts in discovering and developing new mining ventures. I anticipate substantial progress in developing our mineral resources during the present year, and can assure honourable members that we can look forward with confidence to the future expansion and prosperity of the mining industry.

No. 1.

TABLE showing COMPARISON in QUANTITY and VALUE of GOLD entered for EXPORTATION, also the QUANTITY and VALUE of other MINERALS, for the Years ended the 31st December, 1908 and 1909, as well as the TOTAL VALUE since the 1st January, 1853.

Name of Metal or Mineral.	For Year ending the 31st December, 1909.		For Year ending the 31st December, 1908.		Total from the 1st January, 1853, to the 31st December, 1909.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
Precious metals—	Oz.	£	Oz.	£	Oz.	£
Gold	506,371	2,006,900	506,423	2,004,925	19,231,474	75,540,960
Silver	1,813,830	180,872	1,731,336	175,337	12,984,562	1,446,803
Total gold and silver	2,320,201	2,187,772	2,237,759	2,180,262	32,216,036	76,987,763
Mineral produce, including kauri-gum—	Tons.	£	Tons.	£	Tons.	£
Copper-ore	5	100	13	275	1,495½	19,198
Chrome-ore .. .. .	..	..	..	..	5,869	38,002
Antimony-ore	2	60	5	73	3,748	54,849
Manganese-ore	6	29	..	..	19,359½	61,886
Hæmatite-ore .. .. .	..	..	..	..	76½	444
Mixed minerals	1,836½	11,709	1,690½	16,179	31,225½	217,188
Coal (New Zealand) exported	201,685	183,961	100,502	85,846	2,594,985	2,369,811
Coke exported	22	23	2	4	16,429	24,867
Coal, output of mines in Dominion (less exports)	1,709,562	854,781	1,760,473	880,236	26,424,779	13,120,272
Shale .. .. .	..	..	1	4	14,423	7,215
Kauri-gum	8,250	552,698	5,530	372,798	297,807	14,948,401
Total quantity and value of minerals	1,921,368½	1,603,361	1,868,216½	1,355,415	29,410,197	30,862,133
Value of gold and silver, as above .. .. .	..	2,187,772	..	2,180,262	..	76,987,763
Total value of minerals produced, including gold and silver .. .. .	..	3,791,133	..	3,535,677	..	107,849,896

* Including greenstone, 6 tons 14 cwt.; building-stone, 16 tons; auriferous ore, 182 tons; scheelite-ore, 58 tons; unenumerated, 7 tons; pumice-stone, 1,567 tons; wrought stone, tons unrecorded. † Including auriferous ore, 654 tons; scheelite-ore, 68 tons; unenumerated, 6 tons; ironsand, 2 tons; pyrites, 2 tons; stone, 30 tons; greenstone, 6½ tons; pumice-stone, 922 tons.