

ordinary spade-handle. The pikau is simply the bag used to carry the gum to the camp. It is made of an ordinary sack cut down, with shoulder-straps attached for carrying it.

The digger when he works in the swamps uses a hook. This is made out of galvanized piping, 1 in. in diameter. At one end of the hook there is attached an ordinary spade-handle; at the other end a steel toe about 1½ in. long is welded on to the spear and forms what is really the hook. Prior to commencing his hooking operations the hooker usually locates the gum by means of his spear. The experienced hooker becomes very expert at his work, and is able to bring up from a great depth pieces of gum the size of a walnut.

The work of digging "on a face" is generally carried out by parties of men, either co-operating or in some one's employ. Under this system the ground is all turned over to the full depth the gum lies, all roots, stumps, and timber of every description being thrown upon the surface, and as the "facing" proceeds the land is left with a fairly even surface. By this method all the gum is recovered from the land, even to the small chips, and the timber recovered is valuable for firewood and fencing purposes (see illustration).

THE IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF THE KAURI-GUM INDUSTRY.

It would appear to your Commissioners that the importance and value of the kauri-gum industry is not correctly appreciated by the people of New Zealand. Even the most casual glance through the Official Year-book supports such a conclusion. In the Year-book of 1913 only twenty lines are devoted to the kauri-gum industry, which in that year gave employment to six thousand workers, and produced an export to the value of £549,106. The coal-mining industry, which employed 4,328 workers, is given 174 lines. The total value of the kauri-gum exported up to the end of 1912, according to the Year-book, was £16,210,457, while the actual value of coal and coke produced amounted to £19,051,302. And yet in the Year-book of 1912 there are only twelve lines of space given to the kauri-gum industry, while 166 lines are given to the coal industry.

From the following table, which gives the annual value of the export of kauri-gum from the year 1891 to the end of 1913, it will be seen that the average annual value of the gum exported over the period of twenty-three years amounts to £494,126.

RETURN OF KAURI-GUM EXPORTED FROM DOMINION FOR YEARS 1891 TO 1913.

Year.	Quantity.	Value.	Average per Ton.	Total Value of all Exports for Dominion.
	Tons.	£	£ s. d.	£
1891	8,388	437,056	52 2 1	9,400,094
1892	8,705	517,678	59 9 4	
1893	8,317	510,775	61 8 3	9,177,333
1894	8,338	404,567	48 10 5	
1895	7,425	418,766	56 8 0	12,690,460
1896	7,126	431,323	60 10 7	
1897	6,641	398,010	59 18 8	15,503,530
1898	9,905	586,767	59 4 9	
1899	11,116	607,919	54 13 9	21,272,405
1900	10,159	622,293	61 5 0	
1901	7,541	446,114	59 3 0	21,272,405
1902	7,430	450,233	60 12 0	
1903	9,357	631,102	67 9 0	21,272,405
1904	9,203	501,817	54 10 6	
1905	10,883	561,444	51 12 0	21,272,405
1906	9,154	522,486	57 1 0	
1907	8,708	579,888	66 12 0	21,272,405
1908	5,531	372,798	67 8 0	
1909	8,249	552,698	67 0 0	21,272,405
1910	8,693	465,044	53 10 0	
1911	7,587	395,707	52 3 0	21,272,405
1912	7,908	401,305	50 15 0	
1913	8,780	549,106	62 11 0	21,272,405