

1916.
NEW ZEALAND.

MINES STATEMENT

BY THE HON. W. D. S. MACDONALD, MINISTER OF MINES.

Mr. SPEAKER,—

I have the honour to present to Parliament the Mines Statement for the year ended the 31st December, 1915.

Owing to the abnormal conditions caused by the war and the shortage of miners, due to enlistment for military service abroad, there has been a small but inevitable decrease in the value of our mineral-production, but this has caused no appreciable inconvenience to the industries or to the welfare of the Dominion, and it affords me gratification to inform you that the mining community has answered the call to arms in a manner not excelled by those employed in any other industry.

The value of mineral exported, together with that of the coal-output for 1915, amounted to £3,374,523, being an increase of £621,793 above that recorded for the previous year, which, however, does not represent the actual production during those years, the exportation of gold being prohibited by statute on the 5th August, 1914, and not resumed until the following year, when the accumulated supplies were exported. The returns from the mines show that the value of gold and silver produced during 1915 amounted to £1,348,489, as compared with £1,502,649 during the previous year, a decrease of £154,160. The output of coal amounted to 2,208,624 tons, as compared with 2,275,593 tons during 1914, which was the highest annual output yet attained in the Dominion.

MINERAL - PRODUCTION.

The following table shows the quantity and value of gold, silver, and other minerals, coal, and kauri-gum exported during the years 1914 and 1915, also the quantity of native coal consumed in the Dominion during the same periods:—

Product.	Year ending			
	31st December, 1914.		31st December, 1915.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
Gold	227,954 oz.	£ 895,367	422,825 oz.*	£ 1,694,553*
Silver	599,162 "	62,085	957,541 "	95,583*
Mixed minerals	5,395 tons	29,224	3,644 tons	33,161
New Zealand coal exported	302,908 "	282,163	323,992 "	329,731
New Zealand coal used in New Zealand	1,972,685 "	986,342	1,884,632 "	942,316
Kauri-gum	8,473 "	497,444	4,575 "	279,133
Coke	17 "	48	23 "	46
				£
Total value for 1915	3,374,523*
" 1914	2,752,730

* The value of the bullion produced as stated in the official returns from the mines amounted to £1,348,489.