

Of other minerals, including coal, 918,994½ tons were produced, representing a value of £1,068,077, as against 849,105 tons, of a value of £856,517 for the previous year, being an increase of £189,346. The production of kauri-gum was 9,905 tons, valued at £586,767, as compared with 6,641 tons, valued at £398,010, for 1897.

The quantities and values of the chief mineral productions for the years ending the 31st December, 1898 and 1897 respectively, were as follow :—

Product.	1898. Quantity.	1898. Value. £	1897. Quantity.	1897. Value. £
Gold...	280,175 oz.	1,080,691	251,645 oz.	980,204
Silver	293,851 "	33,107	183,892 "	20,872
Antimony-ore	...	...	10 tons	157
Copper-ore	2½ tons	70	...	2
Manganese-ore	217 "	703	180 "	541
Mixed minerals	1,828 "	4,792	1,561 "	5,892
Colonial coal exported, including that used by Home steamers	56,332 "	50,381	76,073 "	69,595
Coke exported	9 "	14	...	...
Colonial coal consumed in New Zealand	850,701 "	425,350	764,640 "	382,320
Kauri-gum	9,905 "	586,767	6,641 "	398,010
Total value of production for 1898	...	2,181,875		1,857,593
" " 1897	...	1,857,593		
Total increase	...	£324,282		

The total value of the gold, silver, coal, and other minerals, including kauri-gum, exported up to the end of 1898 was £70,767,494.

GOLD-MINING.

Many of the works that were in progress in connection with gold-mining have been completed, and operations of a permanent character undertaken and carried out; consequently the quantity of gold and silver recovered has increased. The returns in many instances from alluvial mining have been highly satisfactory. This is mainly due to a more copious rainfall throughout Otago and some parts of Westland, enabling sluicing operations to be more continuously carried on; dredging returns also show an increase, this being in a great measure due to the increased number of dredges and improvements in their construction.

Throughout the goldfields the people are now more settled, especially as the prospect of continuous employment in many of the mines is becoming assured.

The quantity of gold entered for exportation through the Customs for the year ending 31st March last, as shown in Table No. 2, annexed, was 303,525 oz., representing a value of £1,168,930; while the quantity exported for the same period of the preceding year was 251,492 oz., valued at £976,198. This shows an increase of 52,033 oz., principally due to the output in Ohinemuri County, which yielded 41,114 oz. more than the previous year. Of the quantity exported, Auckland contributed 148,183 oz., Marlborough 621 oz., Nelson and West Coast 76,420 oz., Canterbury 12 oz., and Otago 78,289 oz.

QUARTZ WORKINGS.

The gratifying increase in the gold returns from this source is due largely to the result of operations of the Waihi Mine, in the North Island, and of the Progress Mines, in the Reefton District. There has been a falling-off in the Lake County, Otago, owing to the cessation of production in the Achilles Mine, and in the Fiord County, chiefly due to the decrease in yield of the Morning Star Mine at Preservation Inlet.

In consequence of the increase in the number of quartz-reduction plants in which the cyanide process is to be used, and the introduction of wet-crushing with cyanide solution, whereby a larger quantity of quartz can be dealt with than was effected by the use of the stamps in dry-crushing, the future yield of gold should be largely augmented.