MINERAL PRODUCTION.

The annexed Table No. 1 shows the quantity of gold, silver, coal, and other minerals, including kauri-gum, produced during the year ending the 31st December, 1902. The total production of gold and silver was 1,182,241 oz., valued at £2,023,408, and shows an increase in value of £204,367 as compared with that of the preceding year.

The output of other minerals, including coal and lignite, has been 1,373,077 tons, representing a value of £1,198,214, being 124,913 tons in excess of the previous year. Kauri-gum to the amount of 7,430 tons, valued at £450,223, was obtained. Compared with the production of the previous year this shows a decrease of 111 tons, but an increase in value of £4,109.

The quantities and values of the chief mineral productions for the past two years are summarised for comparison as follow:—

Product.	Year ending 31st December, 1901. Quantity.	Value.	Year ending 31st December, 1902. Quantity.	Value.
		£		£
Gold	455,561 oz.	1,753,783	508,045 oz.	1,951,433
Silver	571,134 "	65,258	674,196 "	71,975
Copper-ore	3 tons	105	...	...
Antimony...	30 "	136	...	...
Manganese-ore	208 "	614	...	...
Mixed minerals	696 "	7,775	415 tons	4,422
Chrome-ore	...	...	175 "	525
Colonial coal exported, including that used by Home steamers	159,643 "	142,176	188,677 "	154,747
Hæmatite...	...	...	17 "	116
Colonial coal consumed in New Zealand	1,067,995 "	533,998	1,174,025 "	587,012
Kauri-gum	7,541 "	446,114	7,430 "	450,223
Shale	12,048 "	6,024	2,338 "	1,169
Total value of production for 1902				£3,221,622
" " 1901				2,955,983
Total increase				£265,639

The total value of gold, silver, coal, and other minerals (including kauri-gum) produced up to the end of 1902 was £82,282,586.

During the first six months of this year a substantial increase in the value of gold and silver exported is shown by the following table of comparisons, which has been compiled from the returns of Customs:—

Comparative Statement of Gold and Silver entered for Export during the First Half of the Years 1902 and 1903.

	Half-year ending 30th June, 1902.		Half-year ending 30th June, 1903.		Increase for First Half of 1903.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
	Oz.	£	Oz.	£	Oz.	£
Gold	232,403	889,450	257,198	977,821	24,795	88,371
Silver	323,073	36,707	495,268	48,891	172,195	12,184
	555,476	926,157	752,466	1,026,712	196,990	100,555

GOLD EXPORT.

The quantity of gold entered for exportation through the Customs for the year 1902 was as follows:—Auckland, 201,583 oz.; Marlborough, 601 oz.; Nelson, 5,947 oz.; West Coast, 118,796 oz.; Canterbury, 2 oz.; Otago and Southland, 181,116 oz.

GOLD-MINING.

Quartz.

The working of gold-bearing quartz reefs continues to provide employment for a large number of men in both Islands, the principal centres and largest mines being in the Upper Thames portion of the North Island and in the locality of Reefton in the Middle Island.