There has also been a small decline in the production of some of our other minerals, such as scheelite, copper, manganese, and antimony; these minerals, however, were never exported to any considerable extent.

The number of persons employed in the mining industry during 1908 was 12,774, being a decrease of 307 as compared with the number employed during the previous year. An increase has taken place in the number of men employed at gold-mining in the Coromandel, Thames, Paeroa, Te Aroha, Waihi, Reefton, Westport, Murchison, Kumara, and Orepuki districts, while a slight decrease has occurred over all the other goldfields.

MINERAL-PRODUCTION.

A number of minerals are produced in the Dominion, but reference to Table 1 (annexed) reveals the fact that our mineral-production is confined almost entirely to gold, silver, coal, and kauri-gum. With the exception possibly of kauri-gum, our mineral production is capable of vast expansion; and with the advent of improved processes and the provision of extended markets the prospect of a large increase in our total output appears to be very promising. The value of the bullion exported from New Zealand from January, 1853, until 31st December, 1908, was £74,799,991, while the total value of the mineral-production of the Dominion up to the 31st December last amounted to £104,058,763.

The quantity of gold entered for export during the year ended 31st December, 1908, was 506,423 oz., valued at £2,004,925, being a decrease as compared with the previous year of £22,565. The value of all other minerals produced during the year was £1,530,752.

The details of the quantities and values of minerals produced during the year are as follows: Gold, 506,423 oz., value £2,004,925; silver, 1,731,336 oz., value £175,337; copper-ore, 13 tons, value £275; unclassified minerals, 1,690½ tons, value £16,179; New Zealand coal exported, including coal used by Home steamers, 100,502 tons, value £85,846; shale, 1 ton, value £4; coal for home consumption, 1,760,473 tons, value £880,236; kauri-gum, 5,530 tons, value £372,798; coke, 2 tons, value £4; antimony, 5 tons, value £73: showing a total value for the year's mineral-production of £3,535,677.

GOLD-MINING.

The yield of gold for the year shows a slight decrease of £22,565 in value compared with the previous twelve months; but the year's operations must be considered satisfactory in view of the high average that has been maintained for some years past. The reduction in output is spread over the Auckland, Nelson, and West Coast goldfields, while an increase is shown in the Otago and Southland districts.

The details are shown in the following table:—

District.	Year ending 31st December, 1908.		Year ending 31st December, 1907.		Total Quantity and Value from January, 1857, to 31st December, 1908.
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	
	Oz.	£	Oz.	£	£
Auckland	296,971	1,171,375	298,101	1,187,079	17,348,303
Wellington	...	...	...	...	706
Marlborough ...	297	1,145	795	3,009	351,368
Nelson	3,196	12,783	3,893	15,274	6,825,524
West Coast	86,052	335,722	87,069	343,146	21,525,239
Canterbury	...	...	...	...	387
Otago and Southland ...	119,907	483,900	118,352	478,982	27,481,552
Unknown	...	...	...	...	824
Totals ...	**506,423**	**2,004,925**	**508,210**	**2,027,490**	**73,533,903**