

I. PRODUCTION OF MINERALS.

The following statement shows the value of the exports from metal-mines and kauri-gum fields from the 1st January, 1853, to the 31st December, 1913:—

Classification.	1912.	1913.	Increase.	Total from the 1st January, 1853, to the 31st December, 1913.
	£	£	£	£
Gold	1,345,131	1,459,499	114,368	82,058,543
Silver	84,739	103,866	19,127	1,938,714
Other minerals	20,571	31,532	10,961	488,087
Kauri-gum	401,305	549,106	147,801	16,759,563
Totals	1,851,746	2,144,003	292,257	101,244,907

The increase in the production of gold and silver above that of the previous year is due to the fact that during 1912 the majority of the most productive quartz-mines were rendered idle by the Waihi and Reefton strikes, by which they were closed from May to October.

The improvement in the quantity and value of kauri-gum exported is a most satisfactory feature, being evidence that the gum-fields are likely to be productive for many years.

The increase under the heading of "Other Minerals" is due to the production from the new scheelite-mining operations in Marlborough.

II. PERSONS EMPLOYED.

The following statement shows the number of persons ordinarily employed in or about the metalliferous mines of the Dominion during the year:—

Classification.	Inspection District.			Total, 1913.
	Northern.	West Coast.	Southern.	
Gold and silver	2,263	1,361	1,125	4,749
Scheelite	...	30	133	163
Cinnabar	6	...	...	6
Iron	...	3	...	3
Tin	...	...	20	20
Total for 1913	...	...	...	4,941
Total for 1912	...	...	...	5,239

The reduction shown above in the number of miners employed during 1913 below those employed during the previous year is probably due to a more accurate method of determining the actual number, recently introduced.

In addition to the foregoing, 120 persons were employed at the oil-prospecting wells and refinery in Taranaki.

The number of gum-diggers is not ascertainable, but there are considerably over 1,000 employed on the North of Auckland peninsula.

III. ACCIDENTS.

I regret to record an increase in the number of fatal accidents at our metal-mines during 1913, ten persons being killed and twelve others seriously injured. The fatalities amount to 2.02 persons per 1,000 employed at metal-mines; at our coal-mines the proportion was 1.38 persons per 1,000, which when compared with the average British collieries is about normal.

The cause and description of these accidents is given in the following tables. It will be seen that in only one case—viz., the accident at the Talisman Mine by which two men lost their lives—did the evidence and verdict at the inquest show negligence upon the part of the management, although in some other cases greater safety precautions appeared to be necessary.