

I. PRODUCTION OF MINERALS.

The following statement shows the value of the exports (other than gold and silver) from metal-mines, quarries, and kauri-gum fields from the 1st January, 1853, to the 31st December, 1917:—

Classification.			1916.	1917.	Increase or Decrease:	Total from the 1st January, 1853, to the 31st December, 1917.
			£	£	£	£
Tungsten-ore	...	...	49,070	28,972	Dec. 20,098	230,522
Other minerals	...	...	14,614	6,847	" 7,767	419,489
Kauri-gum...	...	...	339,882	291,917	" 47,965	18,167,939
Totals	...	...	403,566	327,736	Dec. 75,830	18,817,950

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, 1917.
				Northern.	West Coast.	Southern.	
Gold, silver, and tungsten	...	...	...	1,416	925	655	2,996
Cinnabar	...	...	...	16	...	...	16
Totals for 1917	...	...	...	1,432	925	655	3,012
Totals for 1916	...	...	...	1,698	1,144	871	3,713

During the period of the present war—viz., 1914 to 1917 inclusive—the number of metal-miners employed has declined 1,468, and coal-miners 471. Included in the New Zealand Expeditionary Forces up to the 26th April, 1917, were 1,616 miners of all classes.

III. ACCIDENTS.

The following is a summary of persons killed or seriously injured in metalliferous mines during 1917:—

Inspection District.			Explosives.		Falls of Ground.		In Shafts.		Miscellane- ous Under- ground.		Surface.		About Dredges.		Total.	
			Killed.	Seriously Injured.	Killed.	Seriously Injured.	Killed.	Seriously Injured.	Killed.	Seriously Injured.	Killed.	Seriously Injured.	Killed.	Seriously Injured.	Killed.	Seriously Injured.
Northern	...	...	1	...	1	...	1	2	...	1	2	1	...	...	5	4
West Coast	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Southern	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...
Totals	...	...	1	...	2	1	1	2	...	1	2	1	1	...	7	5

Being at the rate of 2.03 fatalities per 1,000 persons employed.

None of the seven fatal accidents were due to any breach of the law by mine-owners or management. Two fatalities were caused by defects in mechanical appliances. The actual cause of one blasting and one cage accident was never proved. The two fatalities from falls of ground were of the class which are considered unavoidable, the individual judgment of the miner being a variable equation. Some experienced and careful miners at times take risks; unforeseen falls will always occur in mining operations.