

1914.

NEW ZEALAND.

MINES STATEMENT,

BY THE HON. W. FRASER, MINISTER OF MINES.

MR. SPEAKER,—

I have the honour to present to Parliament the Mines Statement for the year ended the 31st December, 1913.

The value of the mineral output for the year amounted to £3,187,191, as against £3,042,224 during 1912, being an increase of £144,967.

The value of the bullion produced from our gold-mines amounted to £1,563,365, being an increase of £133,495 above that of the previous year.

Kauri-gum continues to be a valuable export, for during 1913 the exports amounted to 8,780 tons, valued at £549,106, which is the highest point reached both as regards tonnage and value during the past seven years. The total production for the year actually amounted to 9,596 tons, which is the highest production for the past ten years.

The value of scheelite concentrates exported amounted to £22,933, being the highest of any year since this (the youngest) branch of our mining industry was established.

Owing to the disastrous strike during November and December nearly all the large collieries were rendered idle, with the result that I regret to record a decrease of 289,610 tons in coal-production, which for the year amounted to 1,888,005 tons, as against 2,177,615 tons during 1912. The loss of wages to colliery employees during those months exceeded £100,000.

The mining industry, if judged by the annual value of exports or production, appears to have arrived at a somewhat settled condition, slight declines in some branches of the industry being compensated by increases in others. As time passes reduction in our gold-output appears probable, but this will be compensated by an increase in coal-output, and probably by the initiation of an iron industry. The kauri-gum industry appears to be established for many years to come.