

SESSION II.
1918.
NEW ZEALAND.

MINES STATEMENT

BY THE HON. W. D. S. MacDONALD, MINISTER OF MINES.

MR. SPEAKER,—

I have the honour to present to Parliament the Mines Statement for 1917–18.

After taking into consideration the great disadvantages under which mining has been carried on during this the fourth year of the war the production of minerals has, I think, been fairly well maintained, although there has to be recorded a decline in total value. This decline is chiefly due to shortage of labour by the voluntary enlistment of miners, and to the fact that many of the smaller mines and dredges have discontinued operations owing to the increased cost of everything required in the production of gold, while the value of the gold produced has remained stationary.

The value of minerals exported and of the coal-output for 1917 amounted approximately to two millions and a half.

MINERAL - PRODUCTION.

The following table shows the quantity and value of a portion of our mineral export during the years 1916 and 1917, also the quantity of native coal consumed in the Dominion during the same periods. I regret that I cannot go into the matter more in detail, but the Imperial authorities are of opinion that during the period of the war it is inadvisable to give exact information regarding the import and export of gold, silver, &c., and hence the reason for the curtailment of the information usually supplied.

| Product. | Year ended | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|----------------------|----------|
| | 31st December, 1916. | | 31st December, 1917. | |
| | Quantity. | Value. | Quantity. | Value. |
| Tungsten-ore | 266 tons | £ 49,070 | 161 tons | £ 28,972 |
| Miscellaneous minerals | 7,335 " | 14,614 | 2,357 " | 6,844 |
| New Zealand coal exported | 328,183 " | 326,553 | 221,125 " | 236,063 |
| New Zealand coal used in New Zealand | 1,928,952 " | 964,476 | 1,847,294 " | 923,647 |
| Kauri-gum | 5,456 " | 339,882 | 4,594 " | 291,917 |
| Coke | 33 " | 57 | 119 " | 240 |