PROSECUTIONS UNDER THE COAL MINES ACT, 1925.

A trucker employed in the Pukemiro North Mine was prosecuted for striking a deputy, contrary to Regulation 65 of the Coal-mines Regulations 1939. He was convicted and fined £1, with costs £1 1s.

WEST COAST INSPECTION DISTRICT (J. McARTHUR AND C. HUNTER, INSPECTORS OF COAL-MINES).

In accordance with section 42 of the Coal-mines Act, 1925, we have the honour to submit our annual report on the operations of the coal-mines in the West Coast Inspection District:—

GREYMOUTH DISTRICT.

Liverpool State Colliery, Rewanui.—Morgan Seam: Extraction of pillars was continued throughout the year in Nos. 1, 2, and 3 banks, Morgan west area, and in Nos. 1, 2, and 4 banks, Morgan east area. On the extreme western side of the section development was carried on in the steeply-inclined area near the main western fault and also in No. 3 crosscut section, but towards the latter part of the year pillar-extraction was also carried out in conjunction with development work in both areas.

Morgan East Dip: Development work was continued in the main dips and in a small subsidiary panel at the upper eastern side of the section. At the inbye side of the main dip the No. 1 east level was commenced, but disturbed conditions of the ground retarded progress.

The total distance advanced by both dips is 17½ chains.

Kimbell Sections: Development work was completed in the Kimbell west dip, and extraction of pillars commenced on the west side of the section adjacent to the Kimbell west fault.

In the Kimbell east section, pillar-extraction was completed in No. 7 and No. 8 banks. Pillaring was in progress at the head of No. 6 bank and in No. 5 bank, which is rapidly approaching exhaustion.

Anderson Dip Section: Development of the main dip in this area was abandoned on the 11th August, when the lower section of the main dip was sealed off and flooded on account of heating in fallen coal. Since then operations have been confined to splitting and forming pillars in some blocks of solid coal near the lower end of the section.

James State Colliery, Rapahoe.—Development work east of the mine was stopped in an area of burned coal and ash. Operations to the west also ceased on account of intrusions of stone at a point about 2 chains from the outcrop in Cannel Creek.

Strongman State Colliery.—The output was again obtained from development work in the following areas:—

No. 1 North Section: Three main headings have been advanced 19 chains from the main haulage road in the bottom seam, and in an easterly direction two dip headings have proved the existence of coal for a distance of 15 chains from No. 1 north heading. On the western side of the main heading, access to the upper seam was obtained by a short level 5 chains in length, and from this level three headings have been driven 12 chains in a northerly direction in coal of good quality. Operations in the main north headings were seriously retarded by a thinning of the coal and the presence of stone bands varying in thickness from a few inches to 2 ft. 6 in.

No. 1 South Section (South Dip): Work in this area consisted of driving two levels which have advanced 9 chains from the inbye side of the main dip.

No. 2 South Heading: The south heading was advanced in coal to a point 17 chains from the main east heading when highly inclined measures were encountered and an upthrow fault of 24 ft. A stone drive estimated to be 140 ft. in length was commenced and advanced 60 ft. through the fault, at a gradient of 1 in 6, to reach the top seam on the upper side of the fault.

East Headings: Development work was continued in excellent coal for a distance of 6 chains at the inbye side of the "Doherty" fault when a second upthrow fault of 24 ft. was struck in the main headings. Boring was carried out at the fault, which emitted large quantities of water and firedamp.

No. 2 North Section: Development of the main headings and Nos. 2 and 3 panels continued during the year.

The total distance advanced from the main haulage road is 19 chains.

Blackball State Colliery, Blackball.—On the 7th July, 1940, ownership of the property of the Blackball Proprietary, Ltd., was transferred to the Mines Department, and operations from that date have been carried out by the State Coal-mines Branch.

The output for the year was entirely from development work in the main dip headings and areas to north and south of them.

Main Dip Headings: The total distance advanced in No. 1 main heading from the inbye side of the stone drive is 1,000 ft., the seam over the last 300 ft. maintaining a regular dip of 1 in 20 and an average height of 10 ft. Transport of coal from the heading face to the surface is effected by belt conveyors.

No. 1 North Section: Development was continued steadily in No. 1 north level and the block of solid coal between this level and the eastern barrier below the old Blackball Mine workings. The distance advanced from the main dip heading is 17½ chains.

No. 1 South Section: Work in this area was confined to the development of a block of coal south of the main heading. The main level has advanced 8 chains from the main dip heading.

The coal is of a very soft nature with heavy, unreliable roof conditions existing throughout the mine. The workings generally are extremely wet and entail the pumping of approximately 1,000,000 gallons of water per day from the mine.

Blackball Creek Coal Co., Ltd.—The output for the year was again won from splitting and extracting of pillars in Nos. 3 and 4 sections in the top seam workings in the old Blackball Mine.

Briandale Collieries, Ltd., Ten-mile Creek.—Pillar-extraction was continued throughout the year in the top seam, No. 1 section.

In the bottom seam, three drives advanced about a chain in a north-westerly direction from exposed outcrops and proved the existence of clean, hard coal of an average height of 5 ft. 9 in.

Wallsend Colliery (Brunner Collieries, Ltd.).—The greater part of the output was obtained from development in the rope road extension section and Nos. 1 and 2 slant dip sections.

No. 1 Rise Panel: Splitting of pillars was completed early in the year and the section sealed off with three permanent concrete stoppings, one of which, erected in the main rise jig, also effectively seals all exhausted workings to the north of the main haulage road.

"A" Panel: Splitting of pillars was continued throughout the year and should be completed in approximately three months.

"B" Panel: Development of the panel was carried to a distance approximately 5 chains above the dip barrier, the coal improving in quality and gradually increasing in height from 3 ft. 6 in. to 5 ft. 8 in.

"C" Panel: Development of this panel is proceeding, the coal being of good quality.

No. 2 Slant Dip: At a point 10 chains from the extension rope-road an upthrow fault was met in the main dip, and work during the latter quarter of the year consisted of development to the east of the dip. A level in stone approximately 30 ft. in length was driven into the fault to enable boring to be carried out.

No. 1 Slant Dip Section: Development of panels to east and west of the main dip was continued. Towards the end of the year a start was made in the back heading to the dip and advanced a further 20 yards below the bottom level.

Dobson Colliery (Grey Valley Collieries, Ltd.).—The output from the mine was won from development work and splitting of pillars in No. 3 west level section.

No. 3 West Level: Splitting of pillars in the panel adjacent to the Dobson fault was continued throughout the year, and arrangements made for sealing the panel immediately splitting operations are completed.

No. 4 West Level: The main level was extended to the large downthrow fault, and development of the area to the rise carried out in conjunction with the advancement of Nos. 1 and 4 west dips.

No. 4 East Level: A further 3 chains, making a total of 23 chains from No. 1 main dip, has been advanced in the east level, but an upthrow fault was encountered and development terminated. Development of the block of solid coal situated between No. 4 east level and old No. 3 east level has been proceeding for the greater part of the year. The coal in this area is of good quality, with an average height of 16 ft. and a gradient near the fault of 1 in 1½.

No. 5 Main Levels: At a point 18 chains from the terminus of the main endless haulage system in No. 1 dip two main levels were commenced and driven to east and west of the dip for a distance of 6 chains and 7½ chains respectively, whilst the main dip headings were advanced a further 3 chains.