

The above installation is well advanced and part of the team, as suitable tradesmen are scarce, has been transferred to the Waitewhena Valley, where an aerial flying-fox is under construction, together with a mine bin and a roadside bin for the ropeway.

This installation will convey the run-of-mine coal direct from the escarpment to the roadside bin, which is about 300 ft. below, the ropeway being about 1,200 ft. in length.

A suitable ropeway has been secured, and although modifications will be required, with the plant simplified in some details, this will not involve much delay.

As difficulty was experienced with the supply of suitable timber for aerial ropeway structures and bins, this is now being obtained on the site, where a good patch of birch has been secured.

Anchor tunnels for the ropes of the ropeway have been driven, and the necessary foundations prepared for the bins, at the upper and lower terminals, and for the tension structure.

A railway-wagon weighbridge has been installed at the siding, and this has assisted materially with speedy dispatch of consignment returns, the coal having previously been weighed at various stations.

Reserves are adequate. With a reliable access to the opencast face, regular output is assured during the following year, and with the screening-plant in operation (electric power should be available in about two months' time) a further improvement will be had.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE SMITH, District Manager.

The MANAGER, Wilton State Colliery, Ngaruawahia, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

9th April, 1947.

I have the honour to submit my annual report on the working of the above colliery for the year ended 31st March, 1947.

Coal-winning.—The gross output for the year was 79,937 tons 4 cwt., a decrease of 8,715 tons 10 cwt. when compared with the figures of the previous year. After allowing for waste, 3,923 tons 12 cwt., and coal used on works, 859 tons 8 cwt., there remained for disposal a net output of 75,154 tons 4 cwt.

Taking into account the stocks at the beginning and end of the year, the following statement shows details of the coal disposed of during the year :—

1st April, 1946—				Tons		cwt.	qr.
Stock in railway wagons	..	..	..	28	0	0	
Add net output for year	..	..	..	75,154	4	0	
				75,182 4 0			
31st March, 1947—							
Less stock in railway wagons	..	..	..	14	0	0	
Total disposed of	..	..	..	75,168	4	0	

Disposals

				Tons		cwt.	qr.
Railed	..	..	..	45,098	14	0	
Railway sales	..	..	..	28,985	7	0	
Local and mine sales	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Sales to workmen and free issues	..	..	..	1,084	3	0	
				75,168 4 0			

The gross output for the colliery since its acquisition by the Government on 20th October, 1944, totals 202,224 tons 16 cwt.