

TABLE SHOWING THE QUANTITY OF COAL EXPORTED FROM NEW ZEALAND FROM 1930 TO 1948

Year.	Tons.	Year.	Tons.
1930	126,118	1940	81,287
1931	48,334	1941	58,179
1932	35,866	1942	54,700
1933	34,131	1943	42,522
1934	40,361	1944	37,688
1935	46,146	1945	21,989
1936	44,872	1946	27,366
1937	113,116	1947	28,035
1938	55,711	1948	18,913
1939	43,990		

INVESTIGATION OF COAL RESOURCES

Intensive work on the investigation of coal resources was continued by three organizations working as in past years in close co-operation. These organizations are (1) the Coal Survey, whose activities are mainly geological and chemical; (2) an organization set up by the Mines Department to follow up the Coal Survey with detailed topographical surveys and shallow prospecting by means of cuts, pits, and hand drilling; (3) the drilling section of the Mines Department carrying out investigations by percussion and core drilling.

Considerable progress was made by all these organizations and much detailed information concerning mines and fields has become available. The efforts of these organizations have, however, been mainly directed towards the detailed investigation of selected areas so that either underground or opencast mines in those areas can be opened up to the greatest advantage. Accordingly, sufficient information has not been forthcoming to materially affect the position of the coal resources of New Zealand, which have not been re-estimated, and remain as set out in the Mines Statement for the year 1945. It is, however, apparent from recent prospecting work that the Buller Field may contain greater reserves of coal than those previously estimated.

The time is approaching when adequate replacements will have been obtained for mines now approaching exhaustion and when work on the general question of the coal reserves of New Zealand will be intensified.

The most interesting features of the year's operations have been the considerable extension of the seams explored in the Morley area of the Ohai Coalfield to adjoining areas and the consistent results obtained by the close drilling of the main opencast mining area at Stockton. At both these localities uniform conditions of the coal-seams have been proved with consistent results over relatively large areas and large tonnages of coal are available in compact blocks, so that both areas promise to be major coal-producers in the coming years.

Particulars of the activities of the three organizations mentioned above are as under:—

COAL SURVEY

Coal Survey (Geological)

The geological work of the Coal Survey was confined to the South Island, and although staff shortages have now been largely overcome, it will be the middle of 1949 before work in the North Island fields is commenced, when the new members have received some training and experience.