

Mechanization.—At present three coal-cutters are in service, also four electrically driven drills. We are awaiting delivery of three new coal-cutters (one being locally made and two from England). The hauling-apparatus of scraper loaders has arrived, and early delivery of portable slides to complete the units has been promised. One hundred new mine tubs are on order.

Private Railway-line.—Maintenance work has been carried on satisfactorily during the past year.

Bus Service.—Four buses operated by contractors have maintained an efficient service between Ngaruawahia and the mine.

Housing and Mine Buildings.—Departmental houses situated in Ngaruawahia and Glen Massey have been kept in good order. A new ambulance-room has been built, and the old one has been renovated to suit the making and providing of tea to workmen. An additional bathhouse is in the course of construction. Several loans were granted to workmen to build their own homes.

I have, &c.,

J. BAIRD, Manager.

The SUPERINTENDENT, Waikato Controlled Mines, Huntly, to the UNDER-SECRETARY,
Mines Department, Wellington.

13th April, 1949.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit my report on the State opencast coal-mines in the Waikato district for the year ended 31st March, 1949.

KEMP'S OPENCAST, GLEN MASSEY

Coal-production has been continuously maintained during the year and indicates an increase when compared with the previous year, being 68,084 tons, as against 58,717 tons for the year 1947-48.

The total overburden removed from this mine is 2,283,900 cubic yards and the total quantity of coal recovered is 227,020 tons. There is now only a limited quantity of overburden to be removed at this mine and the estimated quantity of coal remaining to be recovered is 10,000 tons.

The above will complete all operations at this mine, where operations have been carried out very efficiently. The ratio of overburden to coal recovered has been approximately 10 to 1, and the coal-seam, as low as 2 ft. thick in places, has been recovered with a minimum of loss.

Experimental work in surface rehabilitation has been carried out during the year in conjunction with officers of the Agriculture Department and Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council. It is too early to forecast the results of these experiments, but much information is being obtained for future guidance.

HILLCREST MINE

This new area, situated adjacent to the Wilton No. 2 Mine, is estimated to contain approximately 60,000 tons of good-quality coal of an average thickness of approximately 5 ft. and overlain by approximately 360,000 cubic yards of overburden.

Stripping-conditions at this mine are good, and although the new roadway of approximately one mile has had to be constructed to the coalfield, it is expected that the results of the operations will prove to be satisfactory.