

1900.

NEW ZEALAND.

INSPECTION OF COAL-MINES REPORT.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

Mr. J. HAYES, F.S.Sc., Inspecting Engineer, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department.
 SIR,— Mines Department, Wellington, 11th April, 1900.
 I have the honour to submit the following report on coal-mining operations for the year ending 31st December, 1899.
 The output for the several inspection districts was as under:—

—	Northern District.	West Coast District.	Southern District.	Total.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Bituminous and semi-bituminous coal ...	66,274	521,762	...	588,036
Pitch-coal	...	...	37,835	37,835
Brown coal... ..	74,854	...	239,688	314,542
Lignite	...	185	34,636	34,821
Totals	141,128	521,947	312,159	975,234

The gross output shows an increase of 68,201 tons over that of the preceding year.
 Operations are carried on at 160 mines, the total number of persons employed being returned at 2,153. This gives an average output of 452·9 tons per person employed. The number of fatal accidents was three, or at the rate of one fatality for every 325,078 tons produced.
 The output of the northern district is 7,262 tons less than last year, whilst the west coast and southern districts show an increase of 75,463 tons.
 Under date of 28th March I made the attached report on those coal-mines in the southern district which were visited by me during the year prior to my appointment as Inspecting Engineer to the department. My successor as Inspector of Mines at Dunedin is Mr. Edwin R. Green, who for some ten years previously was manager to the Freeman's Coal Company, Abbotsford.

REPORT OF INSPECTION OF COAL-MINES, SOUTHERN DISTRICT. Canterbury.

Springfield Colliery.—(31/7/99): Only five men are now employed in the mine getting coal and fireclay. The coal is principally used for pottery-works, there being a very limited demand apart from the company's own requirements. The coal is thin and stony. Ventilation is good, and the workings generally well looked after. Report-books, &c., satisfactorily kept.
Canterbury Colliery, Sheffield (Austin Brothers).—(1/8/99): All coal is now being brought out by the new low-level adit. The coal to the rise being almost all exhausted, it will soon be necessary to open out in a systematical manner to the dip. The seam yields 3 ft. 10 in. of clear coal, which is in two divisions, with a thick band of clay between. The air is very good throughout, and care is exercised to insure safety. Report-book properly kept, and the survey brought up to date. Mr. W. B. Austin, who obtained a second-class certificate at last examination, has succeeded his father as the responsible manager.
Homebush Colliery, Glentunnel (T. Brown, manager).—(3/8/99): Work here consists in bringing back the pillars in a panel of coal near the far end of the level, nine hewers being engaged. Winter trade has been very brisk, and demand in excess of output. Ventilation is excellent, and the general condition of the mine good. Every care is taken to maintain safety. It will be necessary in the near future to consider the question of working to the dip if the demand for winter supply is to be met, and if this matter is gone about in the right way the facilities of output will be very materially increased, and allow of the trade being pushed.