

1901.
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, 7th May, 1901.
I have the honour to submit my report (covering those of the Inspectors of Mines for the several districts) for the year ending 31st December, 1900.
The output for the respective inspection districts was as under :—

—	Northern District.	West Coast District.	Southern District.	Total.
Bituminous and semi-bituminous coal ...	Tons. 79,679	Tons. 594,183	Tons. ...	Tons. 673,862
Pitch-coal	...	...	37,804	37,804
Brown coal	80,624	...	259,162	339,786
Lignite	...	...	42,538	42,538
Totals	160,303	594,183	339,504	1,093,990

In comparison with that of the preceding year, the output shows a net increase of 118,756 tons, made up as follows :—

—	Northern District.		West Coast District.		Southern District.		Total Increase.	Total Decrease.
	Increase.	Decrease.	Increase.	Decrease.	Increase.	Decrease.		
Bituminous and semi-bituminous coal	Tons. 13,405	Tons. ...	Tons. 72,421	Tons. ...	Tons. ...	Tons. ...	Tons. 85,826	Tons. ...
Pitch-coal	...	...	...	...	...	31	...	31
Brown coal	5,770	...	...	...	19,474	...	25,244	...
Lignite	...	...	...	185	7,902	...	7,902	185
Totals	19,175	...	72,421	185	27,376	31	118,972	216

The number of mines in operation (including several lignite-pits from which fuel for private consumption is raised) is returned at 167, employing 2,460 persons.

The average output per person employed was 444·71 tons. During the year there were four fatal accidents, or at the rate of one fatality for every 273,497·5 tons of coal, &c., produced, and one for every 614 persons employed.

Very few, if any, non-fatal accidents which occurred during the year are likely to be attended with disablement of a permanent character. Accidents to eyes are not altogether uncommon in some mines, where pieces of coal have a tendency to fly from the face when the miner is using his pick. Mr. Green (Southern District) refers to this matter in his report. In his report on the coal-mines of the Northern District, Mr. Coutts mentions that no serious accidents have occurred during the year. Mr. Tennent (West Coast District), in referring to the marked decrease of accidents in the mines of the Westport Coal Company (Limited), attributes this result to the safe and more effective system of coal-getting by mechanical appliances which has been adopted by the company, together with efficient supervision.