

WATERCOURSES FOR TAILINGS, ETC.

To meet the requirements of the mining industry in the West Coast and Southern Districts Proclamations have been issued in respect to thirteen rivers and streams other than those referred to in my Statement of last year, and the sum of £5,318 has been paid as compensation. Arrangements have been made whereby it is hoped the difficulties recently existing between the farmers and dredge-owners on the Waimumu and Charlton Creeks will be overcome to the mutual satisfaction of both parties.

SCHOOLS OF MINES.

These institutions continue to prove of great benefit to young men qualifying themselves for positions of responsibility in mines and reduction-works, and many students from the schools in this colony have obtained important appointments in other countries.

The total expenditure on Schools of Mines in the colony, including grants to the school in connection with the Otago University, during the past seventeen years amounts to £33,580 17s. 3d.

COAL-MINING.

The output of coal and lignite for 1901 shows an advance of 133,648 tons as compared with the production of the previous year. To this the output of shale from the mine of the New Zealand Coal and Oil Company (Limited) at Orepuki, amounting to 12,048 tons, must be added, thus swelling the increased production to 145,696 tons, the total tonnage being 1,239,686 tons, as compared with 1,093,990 tons for the year 1900.

The increases for the several districts are as follows: Northern District, 14,781 tons; West Coast District, 75,352 tons; Southern District, 55,563 tons; and the total production for the colony is represented by an output of 754,953 tons of bituminous and semi-bituminous coal, 14,584 tons of pitch coal, 405,152 tons of brown coal, 52,949 tons of lignite, and 12,048 tons of oil-shale.

It may be interesting to note that the total recorded output of coal and lignite in the colony up to the end of last year was nearly sixteen millions of tons.

In analysing the statistical returns of the several districts it is found that in the North Island the mines of the Taupiri Coal Company have the largest output, 75,742 tons being the production for the year. The Hikurangi Coal Company's mine is next in order, with an output of 39,593 tons, followed by Ngunguru and Kiripaka Mines, which yielded 17,789 tons and 15,968 tons respectively. Four other mines had outputs of over 3,000 and under 10,000 tons, and a few small mines were also worked, principally for local requirements.

As usual, the West Coast of the Middle Island continues to occupy the premier position in the coal industry, the output of the Westport Coal Company's collieries alone being 433,572 tons for the year, or over 20,000 tons in excess of one-third of the total production of the entire colony. The output of Brunner Colliery was 127,016 tons, and that of Blackball Colliery 79,152 tons, whilst an output of 20,257 tons was obtained at Mokihinui by the party of miners who are working the mine. There appears, however, very little prospect of anything like this output being maintained by the party.

In the Southern District the class of coal which exists does not admit of shipment, and its use is practically confined to comparatively local requirements, the extent of mining and the output of the mines being to a great extent regulated by proximity to populous centres. As producers, the collieries of the New Zealand Coal and Oil Company (Limited), at Kaitangata, take first place, the output for the year being 114,383 tons, the Nightcaps Coal Company (Limited) following with an output of 31,845 tons. The Allandale Colliery is next in order, its output being 18,469 tons, and that of Shag Point Colliery 14,584 tons. The decrease at the last-named colliery is due to the exhaustion of some of the seams and difficulties with water. Lovell's Flat Colliery produced 14,484 tons, Walton Park Colliery 11,042 tons, Freeman's Colliery 10,843 tons, and Jubilee Colliery, Fairfield, 10,577 tons. The shale-mine at Orepuki had an output of