

drained off in Foote's section; but there is yet a considerable amount of water in the old Miranda Company's shaft which will have to be dealt with as the workings are extended to the dip. An average of seventeen men have been employed at this mine, and the output of coal was 3,923 tons during the year. The mine was inspected twice during the same period, and was found to be safe and the ventilation good.

*Mangapapa-Mokau Mine.*—It was fully expected that this mine would have been worked more energetically by the new syndicate than it had been done in the past, but there has been very little improvement in the working of the mine, and only a very slight increase of the output of coal over the previous year. There has always been a considerable amount of trouble in getting the mine-manager to carry forward the ventilation, also to work the levels and bords uniformly, and thus avoid encroaching on the pillars. In some instances one bord will run into another, leaving a triangular pillar, and this, together with a seam of stone in the centre of the seam, varying from 3 in. to 1 ft. in thickness (which keeps fritting away), makes the pillars of no use for the purpose for which they are intended. However, a change in the management is taking place, and no doubt some of the things that have been complained about will receive more attention in future. An average of fifteen men have been employed, and the output of coal for the year was 4,250 tons, an increase of 737 tons over the previous year.

*Taupiri Coal-mines (Limited).*—This company's operations during the year have been directed to the extension of the various works that were in progress at the end of last year.

In the Taupiri Extended section thirty-two men were employed for the first six months of the year, but latterly only eight men were employed. The work has consisted chiefly of opening up and developing the mine on that portion of the property situated on the west of the air-shaft and under the Waikato River. A large quantity of coal is now opened up, but, as sufficient coal is being obtained from the other sections to supply the demand, there has been no necessity to push on work here for the present.

*Taupiri Reserve:* The work carried forward in this section has been directed in extending Nos. 3 and 4 levels and working the bords from them, but the management has decided not to extend the No. 4 level in a north-westerly direction any further for the present, and contemplates opening up the coal lying to the north-east of the main adit incline from No. 4 level.

*Ralph's Taupiri:* In this section the work is now confined to extending the levels and workings on the company's property on the western side of the Waikato River, the coal obtained from here being of excellent quality. It has been proved by boring that there is a large area of coal in the direction they are at present working, which will enable the company to supply the market for a considerable time to come. In this section the men have been riddling the coal in the workings. This practice has caused considerable dissatisfaction, and frequent complaints have been made to the manager. The company have consequently decided to erect a new screening plant, which has been imported from England, and is now being erected on the surface between the shaft and the Government railway-line. This will be a very complete plant; but, owing to the bank-head being too low to enable the screening to be done by gravitation, elevator-belts will be used to carry the coal to a sufficient height, so that it can be cleaned and separated into four classes.

The average number of men employed by this company on the different sections has been 173, and the output of coal for the year 89,263 tons, an increase of 13,521 tons as compared with the previous year.

*Harrison's Taupiri Mine.*—This mine is situated on the outcrop of Ralph's old workings, and as the coal available was only confined to a small area it soon became exhausted, and has been closed down for some time.

*Drury.*—Mr. Wallace had some men prospecting for coal on the Hinua Range in the early part of the year. The seam of coal was cut through in several places, where it was found to be from 4 ft. to 4 ft. 6 in. thick, but as capital was not forthcoming to further develop it the work was stopped.

*Ohinemuri.*—There was a little work done on the coal lease granted on the Waihi side of the Karangahake Gorge, but as no coal was discovered the work was stopped, and I am informed that the lease will be surrendered.

The total output of coal won from the mines in this district for the year ended the 31st December, 1902, amounted to 192,045 tons, an increase of 16,961 tons as compared with the previous year, made up as follows:—

|                   |     | Output for 1901.<br>Tons. | Output for 1902.<br>Tons. | Increase.<br>Tons. |
|-------------------|-----|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| North of Auckland | ... | 87,055                    | 92,761                    | 5,706              |
| South of Auckland | ... | 88,029                    | 99,284                    | 11,255             |
|                   |     | 175,084                   | 192,045                   | 16,961             |

#### ACCIDENTS.

The following are the names of persons injured in the mines north of Auckland who sent in claims to be placed on the Coal-miners' Relief Fund, the number of days they were absent from work, and the amount of money received: William Sillicks, West Bryan's, foot injured, 8 days, 16s. 8d.; James McCormick, Ngunguru, strain, 12 days, £1 5s.; B. Cusini, West Bryan's, hand injured, 35 days, £3 12s. 11d.; Thomas Fife, Ngunguru, finger broken, 12 days, £1 5s.; James Blue, Phoenix, arm injured, 14 days, £1 9s. 2d.; Richard Hamilton, Hikurangi Coal Company, finger injured, 16 days, £1 13s. 4d.; Adam Girvan, Hikurangi Coal Company, head injured, 78 days, £8 2s. 6d.; Charles Skeels, Phoenix, sprained ankle, 12 days, £1 5s.; Thomas Hopkin, Ngunguru, bruised leg, 23 days, £2 7s. 11d.; Herbert Hutton, Northern Colliery, bruised hand, 14 days, £1 9s. 2d.: making a total of 224 days, £23 6s. 8d.