

1904.
NEW ZEALAND.

STATE COAL-MINES

(REPORT ON THE WORKING OF) FOR THE YEAR ENDING THE 31ST MARCH, 1904.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly in accordance with the requirements of
Section 14 of "The State Coal-mines Act, 1901."*

POINT ELIZABETH COAL-MINE.

Mr. JAMES BISHOP, Manager of State Coal-mines, to the UNDER-SECRETARY OF MINES, Wellington.

SIR,—

Greymouth, 11th July, 1904.

I have the honour to submit my annual report on the State Coal-mines at Seven-mile Creek, Point Elizabeth, for the year ending 31st March last.

Having only taken charge of the State Coal-mines in April last, I may be permitted to say that a large portion of this Point Elizabeth property was thoroughly examined and practically prospected under my direction about seven years ago, on behalf of the Greymouth-Point Elizabeth Railway and Coal Company, who were at that time strongly recommended to proceed with opening up the mines.

There are several seams of coal on the property. The upper seams (two) were exposed show a thickness of from 18 in. to 2 ft. only: no work has been done on these. The next seam is what is known as the Exhibition Seam, the outcrops of which are found on the cliff facing the Seven-mile Creek, and there the thickness ranges from 6 ft. to 16 ft. The other outcrops exposed in the Seven-mile Creek are lower in the measures, and show seams of good workable thickness and of excellent quality.

UNDERGROUND DEVELOPMENT.

At present work is mainly confined to the winning of coal from the Exhibition Seam, affecting which are two large faults coursing north and south, each causing a displacement of about 100 ft., the coal being thrown down in each case to the west. These conditions necessitated putting in three working-tunnels, which are driven from the south-west slope of the range. The positions of these tunnels are shown on the plan attached to this report. The tunnels are numbered 1, 2, and 3.

No. 1 tunnel was driven a distance of 10 chains through rock, when it cut the coal, which is from 10 ft. to 12 ft. thick. After cutting coal the main tunnel was extended into the bottom bedding a distance of 60 ft. for the purpose of erecting the terminal wheel for the main-haulage rope. This led to the cutting of a second seam of about 5 ft. 6 in. thick of excellent coal, hard and bright; between these two seams there is 15 ft. of hard rock. The workings on the Exhibition Seam in this section of the mine are opening up very well. The main level has been driven about 8 chains, and four headings on the rise of the seam a distance of 4 chains, and from them there are ten working-faces. The coal produced is of excellent quality. In the lower seam there are four working-faces, and the coal won has so far given every satisfaction. The whole of the workings in this section are well ventilated by a fan erected on the surface at the top of an incline shaft which is connected with the underground airways.