

With the object of locating other areas of coal in positions conveniently situated for working and conveyance to the present bins and railway-sidings, a considerable amount of survey-work has been done during the year; but still further exploration is requisite before a decision can be arrived at on a matter of such importance. The broken character of the country renders the work difficult and results uncertain.

Accidents.

Under this heading it is to be deeply regretted that four fatalities occurred in connection with the operations of the colliery, on all of which special reports have been presented.

General.

Referring again to the quantity of coal produced and time worked during 1910-11, it will be seen from the figures supplied that the tonnage available for market was 209,253 tons, or 1,804 tons more than for 1909-10, although the time worked was less by twelve days. The reduction of working-time experienced during the year has had a serious effect, not only on the output, but on the general average cost of production, which is much increased, for it must be noted that the maintenance of the mine must be attended to, whether working or not.

Harbour and Shipping Facilities.

The working of the mine was interrupted for eleven days owing to the difficulty experienced by vessels working the port of Greymouth. Such interruptions are, it must be admitted, inseparable from the working of such harbours. This being so, special facilities in the way of suitable vessels for the carriage of coal, also sufficient rolling-stock and cranes, should be provided for the rapid handling of the product of the mines and the general trade of the port, so that vessels may be given the greatest possible despatch when the port is workable.

POINT ELIZABETH No. 2 COLLIERY.

In my report for 1909-10 reference was made to the location and development of this colliery, and I have now to state that during the year ended 31st March, 1911, the works have made good progress. The construction of the tunnels for the endless-rope haulage-line being carried out under contract have been extended by 2,992 ft., making a total distance of 4,702 ft., and leaving approximately 1,320 ft. to be driven to complete this part of the line. The earthworks and trestle bridges are also making good progress, and the main levels are being driven into the coal-seams in preparation for the output of coal when the development-works are completed.

Coal-storage Bins.

The material for the steel understructure for the bins has come to hand, and is being drilled and otherwise prepared at the No. 1 Colliery workshops.

Coal-rubs.

The plates for these (1,000 sets), for which a contract was let to Messrs. Johnson, of Invercargill, are now being delivered, and will be put together on the ground.

The railway (which is an extension of that constructed and hitherto in use for the traffic from the No. 1 Colliery) is now approaching completion, and the locomotive is being run over it with material as required by the officers of the Public Works Department. This may be taken to indicate that it will soon be available for the transport of heavy material for the coal-storage bins and other works, much of which could not otherwise be delivered except at ruinous cost. The principal works still to be completed are—(a) Endless-rope haulage-line tunnels, about 1,300 ft.; (b) two trestle bridges on haulage-line; (c) laying permanent-way on haulage-line; (d) erection of coal-storage bins, screens, picking-belts, &c.; (e) erection of hydraulic brakes (two); (f) the installation of electric-light plant for lighting the haulage-lines, bins, and mine-levels; (g) erection of permanent ventilating-fan. Given the convenience of the railway for delivery of material, and assuming that plant and machinery will come to hand as required, the whole of the works should be completed within ten months.

The colliery is being opened on a seam of excellent coal, the thickness of which was, at the start, from the escarpment, 20 ft.; but it has now, at 15 chains from the opening, thinned, owing to a roll in the coal-measures. This thinning is temporary, for the seam is again at its full thickness in the adjacent valley. The colliery will have natural drainage and other features tending to economical working.

Accidents.

I regret to have to refer to some minor accidents which have occurred, and to one fatality during the year, a full detailed report of which has been presented.

The officers in all branches of the works have carried out their duties in a satisfactory manner, and the Inspecting Engineer has rendered me considerable assistance.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

JAMES BISHOP, Manager.

The MANAGER, Seddonville State Coal-mine, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington.
SIR,—

Seddonville, 23rd May, 1911.

I have the honour to submit the annual report on the workings of the Seddonville State Colliery for the year ended 31st March last.