

MINING ACCIDENTS.

The number of fatalities in connection with mining operations during 1913 was sixteen, and the number of persons reported as seriously injured was twenty-two. The proportion of fatalities per thousand persons employed is as follows: At all mines combined, 1·74; at metal-mines, 2·02; at coal-mines, 1·38: being a slight increase when compared with the proportion of fatalities during 1912.

STATE COLLIERIES.

The output from State collieries during the ten months of 1913 when they were operative amounted to 196,284 tons, as against 261,528 tons during the previous year. The new Liverpool Colliery, near Point Elizabeth, commenced to supply coal towards the end of the year.

At the Point Elizabeth Mine a new development of coal situated to the rise of the old workings will enable the life of this mine to be somewhat prolonged.

The Seddonville Colliery, which has been approaching exhaustion rapidly, was finally closed as a State mine during May of the current year.

Owing largely to the disastrous strike which closed the mines during November and December, from a financial point of view the year's business resulted in considerable loss, as shown upon the balance-sheet appended.

STATE AID TO MINING.

The encouragement of the mining industry by the Government has again been considerable. Subsidies have been granted to miners and prospecting associations, loans have been made for legitimate development of promising mines, and subsidies and direct grants for the construction of roads on goldfields. The free use of Government prospecting-drills has been given when desired. The Government water-races have been maintained and, on the West Coast, considerably extended to supply miners who have proved claims in places where water was not readily obtainable. The following brief details of such State aid during 1913 may prove interesting.

SUBSIDIZED PROSPECTING.

During the year ended the 31st March, 1914, forty-two approved prospecting parties were granted subsidies, amounting to £4,381 8s., of which sum £756 10s. 9d. was expended during that period.

In addition to the above expenditure, £3,439 14s. 2d. granted during previous years was expended during the financial year 1913-14.

LOANS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINING.

Since 1905, when statutory provision was made for advances by way of loans for mining development, five companies have been assisted by grants of loans aggregating £32,725, of which £20,600 has so far been paid as the mining operations have proceeded, and in accordance with the conditions upon which the loans were granted.

In two cases the developments for which the loan was granted are not yet completed; in another case the loan has been refunded.

ROADS AND TRACKS ON GOLDFIELDS.

The expenditure on roads and tracks by subsidies and direct grants during the financial year ended the 31st March, 1914, amounted to £24,143 2s., in addition to which, goldfields' local bodies were credited with goldfields revenue amounting to £17,139 7s. 7d. and gold duty amounting to £22,039 11s. 5d. The total amount of State aid thus given on behalf of the mining industry was £63,322 during the past financial year.