

The comparative tonnage of the various classes of coal for the years 1913 and 1914, is summarized as follows :—

Class of Coal.	Output for 1914.	Output for 1913.	Increase or Decrease for 1914.	
	Tons.	Tons.		Tons.
Bituminous and semi-bituminous ..	1,492,315	1,160,274	Increase	332,041
Pitch-coal	1,998	2,397	Decrease	399
Brown coal	691,367	624,852	Increase	66,515
Lignite	89,913	100,482	Decrease	10,569
Totals	2,275,593	1,888,005	Increase	387,588

The only new colliery of importance opened during the year was that of the Waipa Company, which produced from its mine at Glen Massey, near Ngaruawahia, an output of 50,000 tons of superior lignite or brown coal. The new mine of the Pukemiro Collieries (Limited), in the same locality, has not yet reached the productive stage.

PERSONS ENGAGED IN MINING.

The number of persons employed in and about the mines of the Dominion during 1914 is estimated at 9,204, or about the same as during the previous year. The number employed at metalliferous mines was 4,470, and at coal-mines 4,734. The number of gum-diggers is not known, but exceeds 1,000.

The following table shows the number of miners in each inspection district, and the branch of mining in which they are engaged :—

Classification.	Inspection District.			
	Northern.	West Coast.	Southern.	Totals.
Gold, silver, and scheelite	1,971	1,369	1,104	4,444
Coal	1,019	2,654	1,061	4,734
Other minerals	5	11	10	26
Totals	2,995	4,034	2,175	9,204

STATE COLLIERIES.

The output from State collieries during 1914 amounted to 200,188 tons, of which 128,188 tons was produced from the Point Elizabeth Mine, and 72,000 tons from the newly opened Liverpool Mine. The total output from State mines was 3,906 tons greater than that of the previous year. At the Liverpool Colliery, by boring operations carried out during the year in the valley of Seven-mile Creek, a valuable seam of superior bituminous coal has been proved over an area of about 130 acres. The seam, which is to be called the Morgan seam, averages in thickness 17 ft., and the estimated quantity of coal already proved amounts to about 3,500,000 tons. Boring operations are still in progress, and further reserves of coal will in all probability be proved. This, the most important mineral discovery in the Dominion during the year, was made by a Government prospecting-drill, and is a further tribute to the efficacy of such drills for the purpose of accurately determining the extent and value of mineral deposits.

From a financial point of view the year's business was more satisfactory than during the previous year, though I regret to say that a loss of £14,152 13s. 11d. is shown in the balance-sheet appended. This loss may be attributed to the approaching exhaustion of the old Point Elizabeth Mine, and the fact that the new Liverpool Colliery had not been sufficiently developed to supply all requirements, which is not remarkable, as the mine only reached the output stage during the latter part of 1913.

The State Coal-mines Branch was reorganized on the retirement of the late Mr. W. C. Gasquoine, who for several years occupied the position of General Manager, the management being transferred to the Head Office of the Mines Department.