

2. It may be of interest to note the following comparative figures :—

Year.	Coal produced in Dominion.		Coal imported.	Total.
	Bituminous.	Other Kinds.		
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
1917	1,247,989	820,430	291,597	2,360,016
1916	1,422,074	835,061	293,956	2,551,091
1915	1,404,400	804,224	353,471	2,562,095
1914	1,494,313	781,280	518,070	2,793,663

It will be observed from the above schedule that the figures for 1917 show a decrease of 191,075 tons when compared with the same period for 1916. Coal produced within the Dominion is responsible for 188,716 tons of this shortage, and the importations 2,359 tons.

COMPARISON OF (ACTUAL) OUTPUTS AND IMPORTATIONS FOR FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1917 AND 1918 RESPECTIVELY.

Month.	1917.				1918.			
	Produced in Dominion.		Coal imported.	Total.	Produced in Dominion.		Coal imported.	Total.
	Hard Coal.	Other Kinds.			Hard Coal.	Other Kinds.		
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
January ..	89,049	58,581	14,722	162,352	76,816	67,533	15,925	160,274
February ..	84,104	52,517	29,958	166,579	90,696	63,108	18,560	172,364
March ..	97,816	59,394	90,682	247,892	75,963	67,453	18,793	162,209
April ..	25,484	43,793	7,804	77,081	82,420	73,545	20,733	176,698
May ..	110,667	67,115	56,491	234,273	97,991	85,607	36,497	220,095
June ..	103,254	62,376	29,654	195,284	96,489	74,427	22,093	193,009
July ..	109,682	69,430	27,071	206,183	93,537	86,581	24,727	204,845
August ..	110,882	75,523	11,995	198,400	69,709	82,741	25,991	178,441
September ..	99,126	71,866	548	171,540	85,221	79,865	30,628	195,714
Grand totals	830,064	560,595	268,925	1,659,584	768,842	680,860	213,947	1,663,649

CENSUS OF COAL STOCKS BY GOVERNMENT STATISTICIAN.

	Tons.
As at 30th April, 1917	183,286
As at 31st July, 1917	218,907
As at 31st October, 1917	191,249
As at 31st January, 1918	178,192
As at 30th April, 1918	151,866
As at 31st July, 1918	178,301

To me it is a matter for regret that New Zealand does not under war conditions produce sufficient coal to meet its needs, and so release from employment the valuable tonnage used in bringing over extensive quantities from Newcastle. The beneficial results which would flow to the Dominion from such a release would, in my opinion, constitute a permanent advantage to our people.

FACILITIES FOR HANDLING COAL-SUPPLIES AT THE FOUR MAIN PORTS IN NEW ZEALAND.

3. On the 23rd August, 1917, I addressed my colleague the Hon. Minister for Public Works, as follows :—

“(1.) Attention having been directed to the loss of time and the expense incurred in handling coal-supplies at main centres, it has occurred to me as advisable to collect information in regard to labour-saving appliances, with a view to obtaining a comprehensive report from some competent source in regard to the matter generally.

“(2.) I shall be obliged, therefore, if you can find it convenient to depute one of your officers, or to request your Department, to investigate the position and furnish me with a full report in regard to the matter.