

Liverpool Colliery produced 115,650 tons of marketable coal, a decrease of 9,579 tons on the previous year's production. The disposal, allowing for stock on hand at beginning of year, was as follows :—

Supplied to	Screened.	Unscreened.	Small.	Totals.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Depots	5,691	5,957	2,505	14,153
Railways	15,127	7,638	...	22,765
Other Government Departments	...	617	50	667
Shipping companies	52	3,840	13,626	17,518
Gas companies	404	30,550	17,791	48,745
Other consumers	2,106	8,768	452	11,326
Totals	23,380	57,370	34,424	115,174

The total sales for the year amounted to 149,850 tons, value £192,958, as compared with 202,755 tons, value £256,226, for last year, a decrease in quantity of 52,905 tons, and in value of £63,268.

For the purpose of easy comparison the figures are restated below in tabulated form :—

Comparative Statement of Sales.

Mine.	Total Sales, 1919-20.				Total Sales, 1918-19.			
	Quantity.			Value.	Quantity.			Value.
	Tons	cwt.	qr.	£ s. d.	Tons	cwt.	qr.	£ s. d.
Point Elizabeth ..	34,676	3	3	33,750 14 3	80,286	1	1	88,493 9 2
Liverpool ..	115,174	3	1	159,207 15 8	122,469	9	2	167,732 11 10
Totals ..	149,850	7	0	192,958 9 11	202,755	10	3	256,226 1 0

The average price per ton realized on the total sales for the year was £1 5s. 9·04d., an increase of 5·75d. on last year's average.

The sales of coal, &c., through the medium of the depots totalled 40,157 tons, value £80,083, as against 46,721 tons, value £85,200, for last year.

As will be seen, there was a decreased output of marketable coal from the Point Elizabeth and Liverpool Collieries, aggregating to 58,579 tons. This was mainly due to the operation of an organized "go-slow" policy by the miners from about the 1st September, 1919, to the 13th March, 1920, to the exhaustion of the Point Elizabeth Colliery, and also partly to the number of miners being slightly fewer than were employed during the preceding year. The diminished output by the hewers employed amounted to 13,104 tons, while their reduced earnings aggregated to £2,790.

The Point Elizabeth Colliery was finally closed on the 20th March last, having yielded since its inception a total gross output of 2,453,884 tons. The whole of the supplies now coming to hand are being won from the Liverpool Colliery, and further supplies will not be available until the new James Mine is opened.

There was a profit of £5,787 made on winning coal at the mines, and after deducting the losses sustained by the depots, amounting to £5,766, there remained a credit balance of £21 on the year's operations. Since the close of the last financial year and shortly before the termination thereof, increased hewing-rates, increased wages, increased freights, and increased cost of handling the coal until it reaches the consumers have from time to time been paid. In view of this it will be necessary to increase the selling-prices of coal, which have remained stationary since the 1st July, 1916; otherwise there will be a substantial loss to be faced at the end of the current financial year.

Before resigning his portfolio as Minister of Mines my predecessor, with a view of making the conditions of the employees of the State collieries more congenial, authorized substantial sums for improving the recreation-ground at Runanga, and for the laying-out and levelling of suitable grounds for a bowling-green and tennis-courts. Authority was also conveyed for the erection of a suitable building to enable the men after ceasing their day's work to enjoy a cup of tea.