

seriously curtailed, industries brought almost to a standstill, in addition to which severe hardship was suffered by many aged and infirm persons during an unusually severe winter.

The comparative tonnage of the various classes of coal raised for the years 1918 and 1919 is summarized as follows :

Class.	Output for 1919.	Output for 1918.	Decrease for 1919.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Bituminous and semi-bituminous ..	961,107	1,122,308	161,201
Brown coal	684,331	705,773	21,442
Lignite	202,410	206,169	3,759
Totals	1,847,848	2,034,250	186,402

During the year no new collieries commenced mining operations.

The quantity of coal imported into the Dominion was 391,434 tons, as against 255,332 tons during 1918 and 518,070 tons during 1914.

MINING AND QUARRY ACCIDENTS.

The deaths from accidents at coal-mines numbered ten, being 2·53 per thousand persons employed, or 5·41 per million tons of coal produced, which was slightly greater than during the previous year. For comparison it may be stated that the fatal-accident rate per million tons of coal produced in the United Kingdom for 1918 (the latest year for which statistics are available) was 5·86, which is 0·45 higher than in this Dominion during 1919. I have pleasure in stating, however, that since November last to this date there has not been any fatal colliery accident.

As time passes the inspection of our collieries becomes more searching, and it is believed more efficient, as the result of improved laws and experience.

The number of lives lost at metalliferous mines during 1919 was four, the proportion of deaths per thousand persons employed being 1·82, and of these three were lost by the capsizing of a boat being used in connection with the dismantling of a dredge. There was thus only one fatality actually arising directly from mining-work.

At stone-quarries which come under the provisions of the Act there was only one fatality during the year, or 0·71 deaths per thousand men employed. At quarries which do not come under the Act there were two fatalities, one due to a fall of ground and one due to careless handling of explosives. The inspection of mines and quarries continues to be effectively carried out, and the health and safety of workers are well looked after.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

During the past year the staff of the Geological Survey has been augmented by the appointment of a Geologist, two Assistant Geologists, and a Field Assistant. With a view of expediting the work it has now been decided to still further increase the staff.

Since 1909 until this year the Geological Survey has never had more than two parties in the field at any one time, but during the latter part of the past season three field parties were employed, one in the Waikato district, one in the Whangarei district, and one in the Collingwood district. The area geographically surveyed comprised about 1,100 square miles.

SCHOOLS OF MINES.

The expenditure by the Department on the Schools of Mines at Coromandel, Thames, Karangahake, Waihi, and Huntly in the North Island, and Westport, Reefton, and Dunedin in the South Island, for the year ended 31st March, 1920, was £4,505.