

a coal-cutter 50 b.h.p., two winches of 10 b.h.p. each, two booster fans of 10 b.h.p. each, and two pumps of 10 b.h.p. and 7 b.h.p. capacity respectively. The ventilating-fan is a Keith Blackman type, 56 in. diameter, double inlet, operated by a 40 b.h.p. motor. The fan circulates 85,000 cubic feet of air per minute at a water-gauge pressure of $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. Rails of 30 lb. section are used throughout the workings. Substantially built steel skips of a carrying-capacity of $15\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. are in use in the mine.

Old Stockman Mine, Mokau.—A limited output was mined for local use to meet the requirements of the settlers residing on the banks of the Mokau River.

Coal Creek Colliery (Taranaki Coal-mining Co., Ltd.: Crown Lease, Tatu).—Operations in this mine are being conducted by the Taranaki Coal-mining Co., Ltd.; nominal capital, £10,000. The area was formerly prospected and worked by Hyde, Fougere, and party, and comprises 470 acres of a Crown coal lease in Block 4, Pouatu Survey District. Two headings have been driven in a seam of coal of an average thickness of 3 ft. The mine is situated in the Tangarakau Gorge, at a point eleven miles north by road from Tahora, the present terminus of the Stratford-Ohura Railway, under construction.

Egmont Colliery (Crown Lease, Block 7, Pouatu Survey District).—Formerly this area was worked by William Shanks. During the year a company, registered under the title of "Egmont Collieries, Ltd." (capital, £70,000), was formed to take over and amalgamate various coal-prospecting licenses in the Tangarakau district. A surface tramway three and a half miles in length is in course of construction to connect the mine to the Public Works Department's light railway at Tangarakau Flat. The seam of coal exposed in the bed of Tangarakau River is being developed to produce an output in time for the completion of the screens and tramway. The seam is 5 ft. in thickness, with an intervening band of 11 in. of shaly coal, which occurs near the bottom of the seam.

Power Coal-mine, Ohura.—Prospecting operations were conducted during the year on an area of 227 acres of Crown land situated in Block IV and Block VIII, Waro Survey District. Two seams of coal were located—top seam, 14 in. in thickness; bottom, 3 ft. in thickness. Two drives were driven in the bottom coal-seam, and a longwall face of 100 ft. in length was opened out to test the longwall method of working the coal. The roof broke over the timber and closed the working-face, and the method was subsequently abandoned in favour of a retreating system of working. The seam of coal is overlain by a mudstone roof, varying to sandstone, which becomes friable with moisture, and therefore presents many difficulties.

SERIOUS NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS.

On the 8th May George Gilby, miner, sustained a fracture of a small bone in the ankle, due to a fall of roof-stone, in his working-place whilst he was engaged in hewing coal in Wilson's Colliery.

On the 21st June J. B. Thomson, miner, Pukemiro Colliery, sustained injuries to his face and head, the result of a fall of coal from a bench in his working-place.

On the 20th July R. Holmes, employed at Glen Afton Colliery, had his leg fractured by a blow from a jig-rope.

On the 6th September E. Cooke was injured at Wilson's Colliery by a fall of roof-stone and timber in his working-place. His left leg was broken, and he was off work for a period of 117 days.

On the 28th September Robert Allen received general injuries by being struck on the head and back by a prop falling whilst he was engaged in removing timber in a place where the timber was being withdrawn by means of the lever and chain.

On the 7th November, in the Renown Colliery, Tasman Stephenson sustained a fracture of his left ankle by falling in front of ascending skips on the dip haulage-road.

On the 1st March Harold Tickle, miner, Pukemiro Colliery, suffered a hernia as a result of lifting a derailed skip on to the rails; he is still unfit for work.

PROSECUTIONS.

On the 27th November two truckers were convicted and ordered to pay costs for unlawfully riding on trucks attached to the Hikurangi Coal Co.'s endless-rope tramway.

DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES.

(Regulation 82.)

On the 30th August, a fire broke out in the old workings of the Waikato Extended Colliery. The workings were subsequently sealed off by three stoppings erected in positions near the entrance of the mine.

WEST COAST INSPECTION DISTRICT (MR. C. J. STRONGMAN, Inspector).

During 1928 the coal-output for the combined Nelson, Buller, Reefton, and Grey Districts was 1,200,839 tons, an increase of 44,648 tons over the year 1927. The output from the Nelson District shows an increase of 2,039 tons; Buller a decrease of 1,276 tons; Reefton a decrease of 6,473 tons and Grey District an increase of 50,358 tons. The total number of men employed during the year was 2,844.

BULLER DISTRICT.

Denniston Colliery—Coalbrookdale Mine.—The results obtained from the adoption of the panel system are still proving satisfactory, and is now being used for all development work. In the Wareatea the pillars are somewhat irregular. In McIlwain's section the main headings have been extended 300 ft. in thick coal. The No. 1 right and left panels were completed, and straight-line pillar-extraction commenced in both panels. The No. 2 panels, left and right, have been started away and extended several chains. The coal is of fair quality. In the Waterloo section the workings have been extended to the dip on the west side of the main heading. Development work is being carried out in high coal of good quality. In Birchall's section pillar-extraction has been carried out where the coal thinned as it went to the rise. In the South Heading section work has been confined to forming a panel on the west side of the main heading, while on the east side a heading has been driven on a level course towards the outcrop in Sullivan's Creek. The coal is of fair quality. In the Extended section pillar-extraction has been carried out in the old and new dip sections. A drainage-tunnel has been set away to drain the old Extended pillar area. In the Extension section there has been a development of the panel system through the section. The main headings run south-westerly towards Sullivan's Creek. The coal has proved of good quality and thickness. In the Cascade section work has been confined to pillar-extraction. Ventilation has been maintained efficiently through the mine by fan and natural circulation. Pumping has been reduced by development in drainage. Stone-dusting has been efficiently carried out. A motor-road, 2 miles 52 chains in length, was constructed to the Wareatea section of this mine. Suitable travelling-roads were completed between this road and the Extension section. A fleet of fifty-seater Minerva char-a-bancs conveys the employees to and from work under comfortable conditions.

Ironbridge Mine.—On the 13th December a serious fire broke out in Kruger's section. The fire was kept in check by pumping water on the flames. This enabled the fire to be kept in check until a line of stoppings was erected. The Proto apparatus was extensively used during the fire-fighting operations, and proved of great assistance for making examinations in an irrespirable atmosphere. Many thousands of tons of valuable coal were lost; this loss would have been considerably reduced and possibly entirely prevented if more care had been given to the laying-out of the mine in the first instance. Development work has been carried out in Young's, Garing's, and portions of Deep Creek sections. As a result of experience gained, the height and width of the places driven are now considerably less than formerly. The coal is of fair to excellent quality.