

A miner was charged with selling nine cartridges of Monobel explosive without being the holder of a license to sell such explosive as required by Regulation 130 of the Explosive and Dangerous Goods Act, 1908. He was also charged with failing to return to the place of storage on the surface the whole of the explosive remaining in his possession at the end of the shift as required by Regulation 224 (4) of the Coal-mines Act, 1925. He was convicted and fined £3 and Court costs on the first charge, and £2 with Court costs on the second.

WEST COAST INSPECTION DISTRICT (J. HADCROFT and W. PARSONAGE, Inspectors of Coal-mines).

In accordance with section 42 of the Coal-mines Act, 1925, we hereby report on the workings of the coal-mines in the West Coast Inspection District for the year ended 31st December, 1936.

The combined output from the Nelson, Buller, Reefton, and Grey sections of the district was 844,570 tons.

The following summary shows the changes in output from the previous year in the different sections of the district and in the number of men employed:—

				<i>Output.</i>			
				1935.	1936.	Increase.	Decrease.
				Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Nelson District	..	..	..	25,221	27,483	2,262	..
Buller District	..	..	..	313,129	349,268	36,139	..
Reefton District	..	..	..	49,916	45,999	..	3,917
Grey District	..	..	..	415,387	421,820	6,433	..
				803,653	844,570	44,779	3,917

Net increase, 40,917 tons.

Number of Men employed.

				1935.	1936.	Increase.	Decrease.
Nelson District	..	..	..	76	70	..	6
Buller District	..	..	..	710	723	13	..
Reefton District	..	..	..	111	96	..	15
Grey District	..	..	..	947	961	14	..
				1,844	1,850	27	21

Net increase, 6.

In the Reefton section the principal cause of the reduced output was the closing down of the Morrisvale mines. Apart from the Reefton section, all other sections show a marked increase. The total increase for the district of 40,917 tons with only an increase of six employees proves that the mines generally worked better time.

During the year very little development work was done and the bulk of the coal was won from pillar-extraction. About the most important development was the preparation for the opening-up of the new State mine area known as the Nine-mile area and situated to the east of the present James State Mine.

The interests in safety precautions are being well maintained. The most noticeable are the almost general installation of automatic stop-blocks and trippers on jigs and the increase in the use of hard hats for miners.

GREYMOUTH DISTRICT.

Liverpool State Colliery, Rewanui.—Coal-winning operations were carried out on similar lines to those of the previous year.

Morgan Seam: Coal-winning operations in this section were chiefly confined to pillar-extraction. Development-work was continued in No. 3 bank west, the incline being extended approximately 3 chains to the rise and the level 6 chains, the coal being of good quality. In Nos. 1 and 2 banks the work of splitting and robbing the pillars was continued. As the Seven-mile Creek passes over the workings in this section coal is being left behind to support the bed of the creek. In Nos. 1, 2, and 4 banks, Morgan east, the barrier pillars between panels are being split preparatory to extraction. To the right of these banks the pillars are being split and robbed, complete extraction being impossible owing to creeks crossing the area. In Nos. 5 and 6 banks, Morgan east, coal-winning operations ceased, and all plant was withdrawn.

Anderson and Kimbell Sections: The production of coal in these sections was chiefly confined to pillar-extraction. No. 8 bank, Kimbell east, was driven a total distance of 15 chains to the rise before the seam turned and the coal became intersected by dirt-bands to such an extent as to become unworkable. Pillar-extraction was then commenced. In Nos. 3 and 4 banks, Kimbell east, pillar-extraction was continued to a point 3 chains above the main level. Signs of heating were noticed, and the section was sealed off on the 18th December. In Nos. 2 and 3 banks, Kimbell west, pillar-extraction approached to a point 3 chains above the main level. The pillars in No. 0 bank, Kimbell east, are being won from No. 1 Kimbell west.

Development: The James and Anderson dips were extended in a westerly direction and a crosscut dip was started in a southerly direction from an intersection of the No. 2 dip at a point 13 chains below the Anderson main level. Preparations were made to drive a dip in the Kimbell west level in order to develop a block of coal lying to the dip of this level.

Rescue Brigade: During the year five sets of Proto rescue apparatus were provided, and volunteers were called to form a rescue brigade. Out of the nineteen names submitted a brigade of five was formed, and from that time weekly practices have been held. On the completion of the training of this brigade new members will be chosen and the work of training continued.

James State Colliery, Rapahoe.—New Dip Section: The development of this section to the east of the main rope-road was continued. Development to the north was stopped when a fault was encountered, and development-work in two small sections was restarted to the west of the main rope-road. The coal in these sections is of good quality, from 3 ft. to 6 ft. in thickness, but the area is very limited.

Cannel Creek Section: Towards the end of the year a downthrow fault running in a north-westerly direction with a displacement of 40 ft. cut the main development headings, and this work is now confined to two levels running north-west and parallel with the fault. In the south level and crosscut dip pillar-extraction was continued.