

Independently of the instructional work carried on at Dobson, the training of men in rescue-work was continued during the year at the Liverpool State Colliery where five sets of Protos are kept.

The levy imposed on the output of coal from the mines which are served by the Dobson Rescue-station to meet the cost of its upkeep was reduced last year from 1d. per ton to $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per ton.

SOCIAL AMENITIES IN MINING TOWNSHIPS.

During the year new recreational facilities were made available at a number of mining townships, and I am happy to say that there is ample evidence that such amenities are increasingly utilized and appreciated by the miners and their families. As in former years, I have continued to make available small grants to libraries in mining townships for the purchase of books.

CARBONIZING AND BRIQUETTING.

The low - temperature coal - carbonizing and briquetting plant of Waikato Carbonization, Ltd., at Rotowaro, operated for ten months during 1938.

The following figures show the production during that period :—

Raw coal carbonized	..	..	..	39,412 tons.
Carbonized coal produced	..	..	..	19,311 tons.
Average percentage of carbonized coal to raw coal				49 per cent.
Carbonettes manufactured	..	..	..	22,500 tons.
Oil treated	..	..	..	284,835 gals.
Pitch produced	..	..	..	982 tons.
Light oil produced	..	..	..	62,700 gals.
Heavy oils	..	..	..	74,790 gals.
Creosote produced	..	..	..	36,800 gals.

The briquetting plant of Briquettes Ltd., at Onehunga, produced 1,085 tons of briquettes during 1938.

For the twelve months ended 31st December, 1938, Smokeless Fuel and Briquettes (Canterbury), Ltd., produced 5,889 tons of briquettes at its works at Sockburn.

LABORATORY INVESTIGATIONS.

The Dominion Laboratory has continued to carry out the testing and analysis of mineral samples and mine gases for the Department and to act in an advisory capacity when required.

Prospectors' samples tend to be fewer each year. Those containing gold came from such well-known localities as Kuaotuna, Poerua, and Skippers; lead and zinc ores were examined from previously-worked areas at Te Aroha and Waiorongomai, and galena (lead sulphide) and copper pyrites from Murchison; molybdenite was present in a small specimen from Merrivale, Southland, a locality from which it has not been previously reported; a sample of asbestos from D'Urville Island was examined; the best of the manganese ores received came from Red Island, south of Waimarama, Cape Kidnappers, and from Otau, near Bombay, the ore from Red Island being of exceptionally good quality; numerous samples of diatomaceous earth were reported on and consideration given to possible uses; a number of borings were examined for scheelite for the Employment Division of the Labour Department.

Some chemical assistance was given to the Director of the Thames School of Mines, who was investigating the treatment of refractory ore from Reefton. The development of the production of iron and steel in the Dominion would have a profound effect on mineral industries generally, and in this connection the analysis of numerous samples of iron-ore from Onekaka, also coal and limestone, by the Laboratory should be noted.