

that the rapid exhaustion of this mine must in the near future eventually terminate its working-life, notwithstanding the care taken to win every ton of coal and fireclay available. In my previous report mention was made that the Brunner Mine was likely to take a place in the present issue as a going concern; but, in reference to the life of the mine during the forthcoming year, conditions are more doubtful. Unless the surface subsidence as affecting the heavy overlying terrace-lands admits the further removal of pillars with safety, the date of absolute abandonment cannot be definitely estimated. However, with the precautionary measures observed in working the few remaining pillars in a regular and systematic manner, subsidence of the elevated terraces has shown no marked features of danger during the year, although some of the pillars taken out consisted of coal of fair thickness. The manufacture of firebrick and coke continues to give full employment, and it may be assumed that with the large accumulations of fireclay in stock, the Brunner firebrick will yet take a leading place for some considerable time to come. The workmen continue to maintain their monthly examinations of Brunner and Tyneside Mines, while the reports recorded at the colliery-office may be justly regarded as creditable records. There were no serious accidents reported; all reports under the Coal-mines Act are strictly kept to date. Seven inspections made.

Point Elizabeth Colliery (New Zealand State Coal-mine; James Bishop, manager).—Details of the working of this State coal-mine are published in Parliamentary Paper C.—3B.

Nine-mile Beach.—John Kane of Greymouth continues to take coal from the area held under license (previously cancelled) on the ocean side of Point Elizabeth property.

COAL-MINERS' ACCIDENT RELIEF FUND, ADMINISTERED UNDER THE COAL-MINES ACT.

Where the funds are managed under medical associations the following table shows the contributions paid by the various coal companies, the balances credited at the Post-Office Savings-Bank, the amounts expended on accident allowance, and the increase on fund for the year 1905:—

Name of Colliery.	Contributions.	Ba'ance in Savings-Bank.	Accident Allowance.	Increase.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Denniston	576 9 5	4,798 9 11	150 11 6	508 18 11
Millerton	513 3 4	1,973 3 9	363 15 0	205 8 4
Blackball	137 12 11	831 1 2	84 5 5	76 17 3
Brunner and Tyneside	163 17 11	937 16 4	96 7 1	92 8 7
Interest	244 14 10
Totals	1,635 18 5	8,540 11 2	694 19 0	883 13 1

The contributions paid by the colliery-owners to the Coal-miners' Accident Relief Fund, under the Public Trust Account, was £416 17s. 7d., while payments made towards accident-relief amounted to £241 5s. 2d., leaving a balance of £175 12s. 5d.

ACCIDENTS.

Of the number of accidents reported as coming within the meaning of section 60 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1905," two were fatal, and ten not serious. Of the persons killed, one was underground, and the other a (youth) surface hand. In terms of Regulation 11, paragraph (b), administered under "The Coal-mines Act, 1905," the sum of £25 was paid to the widow of the deceased Walter Meadowcroft, Blackball, death being certified as the result of a strain while lifting the end of an ordinary 7 ft. prop. Such an occurrence cannot be regarded as an accident under the Act.

Fatal.

Denniston Colliery.—(12/1/1905): John Champion (youth), screen-worker, killed with railway-wagon at Denniston brake-head.

Puponga Colliery.—(26/1/1905): James Muirhead, underviewer, killed with runaway loaded trucks on dip haulage-road, caused by breakage of coupling-chain.

Non-fatal.

Puponga Colliery.—(25/2/1905): John Keenan, deputy, sustained compound fracture of leg, caused by fall of stone while setting timber.

Denniston Colliery.—(6/6/1905): A. Croft, coal-cutting-machine attendant, had small bone of leg broken, caused by fall of stone on main road while shifting machine.

Puponga Colliery.—(12/6/1905): Frank Lomas, trucker, sustained scalp wound and otherwise bruised, caused by runaway empty truck.

Denniston Colliery.—(31/7/1905): James O'Gorman, roadsman, had leg broken, caused by a rail slipping off an empty iron pit-truck.

Brunner Colliery.—(11/8/1905): John Hazeldine, collier, was injured on head and face by a 6 ft. rail, slipping in front of full truck.