

The air-compressing plant is in continuous use (three shifts daily); the 4 in. pipe-line laid for the conveyance of air underground is 5,500 ft. long. The air is being utilized for actuating pumps and hauling-engine in the No. 1 dip section. A similar installation is being got ready for the No. 2 section, and will be in operation at an early date.

The application of the compressor so far has proved to be both convenient and economical in working. The engines have worked well from the start.

The surface hauling plant, the screening plant, and coal-tipping appliances continue to work satisfactorily, and with the minimum of cost in manipulation and repairs.

The sawmill continues to be of great service, not only in connection with the supply of timber for colliery buildings and for underground use, but also for the preparation and supply of timber for the building of workmen's homes.

#### *Exploration.*

Exploratory work by boring from the surface has been carried on in both working-sections by diamond drill, and the results show that the seam now being worked extends far beyond the point reached by the most advanced headings so far driven, and also that the thickness of the seam is being fully maintained. In this connection there is one adverse feature—the bores in No. 1 area have proved that there is a downthrow fault coursing east and west. The displacement due to this fault is 150 ft. (see section). The existence of this trouble will necessitate the making of special arrangements for winning the coal from the dip side, but for this there is no immediate urgency.

The total boring done amounts to 965 ft., in two holes. The new diamond boring-machine recently imported, and capable of boring 1,500 ft., has been working most successfully on the above work. It was found necessary to make some alterations to the machine on arrival here, and these having been done the machine is working perfectly.

The surface outcrops have also received careful examination, more especially on that portion of the reserve lying to the north of the present colliery, and there extending over, approximately, 4,000 acres. Six seams of coal have been traced, ranging in thickness from 3 ft. to 21 ft. Several of these seams possess all the properties essential to first-class coal, and in many respects they are superior to the best coal at present produced within the colony.

#### *Harbour and Shipping Facilities.*

The frequent blockage of the Port of Greymouth, due to heavy seas rendering the bar unworkable, or to floods in the Grey River, still continues to be the principal hindrance to the progress of the coal-mining industry on this field.

It may also be noted that when the bar is workable and shipping abundant the facilities for berthing vessels and for the handling of cargo inward and outward appear inadequate for the work required to be done.

As serving to illustrate the effect on the output of coal, it may be mentioned that the possible working-days for 1906-7 were 282, which were reduced by thirty-three days owing to lack of shipping from causes above referred to. Thus 12·8 per cent. of the time was lost, and the output was reduced by at least 20,000 tons.

The general effect of such frequent interruption of work is to reduce the output, also the earnings of the workers, and increase the average cost of production.

#### *Accidents.*

Accidents of a minor character occurred during the year, and two of a somewhat serious nature, but no fatality.

The payments made under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act—being at the rate of 50 per cent. of wages earned prior to the accident—amounted to £953 4s. 1d., being at the rate of 1·375d. per ton of coal sent to market, which is somewhat lower than is given under similar provisions applying to the coal-miners of the United Kingdom.

#### *Employees.*

There were employed during the year a total of 271 men and youths in connection with coal-winning, 140 being coal-hewers, 111 other classes of labour, and 20 youths. Average time made, 4·81 days per week; hewers' average daily earnings, 14s. 4·35d.

#### *Future Developments.*

The future developments of the present colliery, so far as the underground workings are concerned, will be mainly carried on towards the dip of the field where the coal maintains its full thickness; and in addition to the present seam there is another workable seam 200 ft. lower to be won by cross-measure drifts, and it may be found advantageous to sink a shaft on the dip as