

In my last year's report brief reference was made to the area of coal-bearing country lying to the north of the present colliery; and recent work done in this direction shows that the coal-outcrops are much more extensive than the first examination showed, for it is now found that the seams are exposed in the bluffs adjacent to Spring Creek, Garvey's Creek, the main Seven-mile Creek (near its head), and in the gorge of the Ten-mile Creek. The country between the head of the Seven-mile and the Ten-mile Creek Gorge is particularly solid, and gives promise of a very extensive field without faulting.

With the object of the early development of this part of the State coal-reserve, surveys of the country are being made (from what will be the railway terminus) to the principal outcrops, so as to locate the tram-lines for conveyance of the coal to rail and thence to the port.

It may be said that work recently done has amply confirmed the high opinion previously formed as to the value and extent of this new coalfield. Plan of the area on which prospecting has been done will be found attached.

#### HARBOUR AND SHIPPING FACILITIES.

As stated in former reports, the harbour at Greymouth is exposed to storms, occasionally preventing vessels entering the port; and to floods, which interfere with vessels being moved at the wharves: thus at times the work of loading is delayed, and the coal industry seriously hampered.

New works are in progress at the port, in the direction of providing more extensive berthage than now exists at the present wharves.

In addition to improving the berthage, more coal-hoppers and cranes will be required to meet the demands of the trade of the port, and to enable the mines to meet their engagements. In this connection, it should be borne in mind that, owing to new developments, a greatly increased quantity of coal will soon be available for export from Greymouth.

#### ACCIDENTS.

It is to be regretted that a number of minor accidents and one fatality occurred during the year, a youth employed in connection with the screening-plant having lost his life in a way that could not have been foreseen.

The payments made under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act amounted in all to £1,016 18s. 10d., which works out to 1-12d. per ton of coal sold.

In connection with this feature of our work, it may be said that although the accidents are numerous, many of them are of a trifling character; yet, however, trifling they may be, it means absence from work for fourteen days or more for each person hurt.

#### EMPLOYEES.

There were employed during the year 299 underground in connection with coal-mining, and seventy-nine in connection with all other classes of labour overground. The average number of days worked per week was 4-63, and the coal-hewers' average daily earnings was 14s. 8-76d. in No. 1 section, and 15s. 0-91d. in No. 2. The general average of both sections was 14s. 10-54d.

#### FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS.

The workings of the present colliery must be extended towards the dip, and to enable this to be done with security it is proposed to add additional pumping-power to deal with the water which is certain to be met with in increased quantity as work proceeds.

The rise portion of the field will also be exploited for the thick coal known to exist in that direction.

At some future time it may be found advisable to sink a shaft from which to win the coal from the extreme dip; but now, in order to provide for the probable large increase of demand, it will be found more advantageous to energetically push on the works required for opening up and putting on the market the coals from the seams above referred to as existing in abundance near the head of the Seven-mile Creek. These coals are of the very highest quality, being low in ash, only a trace of sulphur, and of high calorific value.

#### GENERAL.

The output, which at present averages 1,000 tons daily, requires that the workings shall be energetically carried on, and that, consistent with safety and economy, nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of its being maintained.

The officers in all departments have done good work during the year, realising the need for constant vigilance in order to secure the safety of the workers under their control, and at the same time insure the most economical results.

The agreement entered into for the regulation of hewing and other rates of payment to the workers has proved satisfactory to both sides, and, although the period for which it was made has expired, it is being worked under pending a new one being entered into.

In conclusion, I may be permitted to say that the Consulting Engineer has rendered me valuable assistance in connection with various proposals connected with the extension and future development of these works.

I have, &c.,

JAMES BISHOP, Manager.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.