

DAYS WORKED.

The mine during the year worked 231 days 5 hours, which is an increase of 10 days over the previous year's working. The average number of days worked per week was therefore 4.45.

The number of men and boys employed in and about the mine throughout the year averaged 105. The miner's average daily earnings for the year works out to 17s. 8d. per shift, an increase of 8d. per shift over the previous year.

There were a few minor accidents during the year, but not any of a serious nature.

PLANT.

The plant and machinery in and about the mine has been maintained in good condition, and during the year seventy mine-tubs were made at the colliery workshop. Also a large stable was built near the entrance to the mine, thus enabling the horses to be brought out of the mine daily.

UNDERGROUND DEVELOPMENT.

Operations underground have been carried out much on similar lines to that of the previous year—viz., developing the West workings, and extraction of pillars in the Cave section.

In the West section, where ten pairs of miners are employed, coal of excellent quality was produced during the first nine months of the year, but recent development has however proved the north-west portion of the area to be considerably faulted, and the prospects of extending our present workings do not appear very promising.

In the Cave section, where pillars are being extracted, there is in places from 4 ft. to 5 ft. of soft coal overlying the main seam. This coal, not being marketable, is left in the old workings and becomes buried by falls of roof, consequently heating has commenced which necessitated a line of stoppings being built to seal off the heated workings. The main-dip workings of the same section, where a large area of soft coal was opened up during the labour troubles in the coal-mining industry in New South Wales, has during the year caused much trouble and expense through spontaneous combustion, and although every precaution was taken in sealing off this portion, the first line of stoppings was found inadequate and an additional line had to be built. Fortunately in sealing off these heated portions the coal lost is not marketable, and would not have been worked had heating not commenced.

EXPLORATION.

Work under this head has been confined to boring by means of the diamond drill on the Charming Creek area. During the year a considerable amount of boring has been done in a systematic manner on a north-easterly line from the central part of the field where the 20 ft. seam of coal was first proved by boring to exist. Along this line bores Nos. 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 were put down, the distance between each being approximately 20 chains. In addition two flank-holes, Nos. 9 and 16, were put down on the western side of the line, also No. 15 put down 20 chains south from the central part of the field.

The two flank-holes and one to the south failing to find coal, also all bores beyond No. 10 failed to find coal of a workable thickness. It appears the area of workable coal is somewhat limited, having a width only of about 40 chains from east to west, and the same in extent northwards.

This completes boring operations on the Charming Creek area, and a schedule of all bores put down has been forwarded to the Department.

In conclusion, permit me to say that all the officers have performed their duties in a satisfactory manner, and I am indebted to the Inspecting Engineer for valuable assistance rendered in connection with the working of the mine and prospecting the new coalfield.

I have, &c.,

I. A. JAMES, Manager.