

For the better control of drilling operations, and protection from influx of water into the oil-bearing beds, regulations based on those in operation in other countries are being prepared.

COAL-MINING.

The output of coal during 1913 amounted to 1,888,005 tons, as against 2,177,615 tons during 1912, being a decrease of 289,610 tons. This decrease is accounted for by the general strike, by which nearly every colliery of importance was closed during the months of November and December. The shortage of coal thus created was made good by importations from foreign parts, which amounted to 468,940 tons—the greatest quantity ever imported—being 104,581 tons in excess of that imported during 1912.

The following is a comparative statement of the coal and lignite raised during the years 1911, 1912, and 1913 :—

Inspection District.			Output for 1912.	Output for 1913.	Decrease, 1913.	Output for 1911.	Increase or Decrease, between Years 1912 and 1911.	
			Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.		Tons.
Northern	..	..	383,847	349,586	34,261	397,872	Decrease	14,025
West Coast	..	..	1,301,461	1,057,564	243,897	1,218,693	Increase	82,768
Southern	..	..	492,307	480,855	11,452	449,508	„	42,799
Totals			2,177,615	1,888,005	289,610	2,066,073	Increase	111,542

The comparative tonnage of the various classes of coal for the years 1912 and 1913 is summarized as follows :—

Class of Coal.			Output for 1913.	Output for 1912.	Increase or Decrease for 1913.	
			Tons.	Tons.		Tons.
Bituminous and semi-bituminous	..	..	1,160,274	1,417,608	Decrease	257,334
Pitch-coal	..	..	2,397	4,115	„	1,718
Brown coal	..	..	624,852	544,675	Increase	80,177
Lignite	..	..	100,482	211,217	Decrease	110,735
Totals			1,888,005	2,177,615	Decrease	289,610

The most important development in the coal-mining industry during 1913 has been the entry of the new Liverpool State Colliery near Point Elizabeth into the list of productive collieries, and the approaching completion of the plant and surface arrangements at the new Waipa and Pukemiro Collieries, on the Waikato Coalfield.

PERSONS ENGAGED IN MINING.

The number of persons employed in and about the mines of the Dominion during 1913 is estimated at 9,191, or 376 less than during the previous year. The number employed at metalliferous mines was 4,941, and at coal-mines 4,250. The number of gum-diggers is not known, but exceeds 1,000.

The following table shows the number of miners in each inspection district, and the branch of mining in which they are engaged :—

Classification.	Inspection District.			
	Northern.	West Coast.	Southern.	Totals.
Gold and silver	2,263	1,361	1,125	4,749
Coal	824	2,411	1,015	4,250
Other minerals	6	33	153	192
Totals	3,093	3,805	2,293	9,191