

In addition to the annual report, Bulletin No. 17 and Palæontological Bulletin No. 3 were published last year. An exhaustive report on the Reefton district (Bulletin No. 18) is now in the Press. Palæontological reports by Mr. Henry Woods and Dr. Newell Arber, of Cambridge—one on Cretaceous Mollusca, and the other on the Mesozoic Flora of New Zealand—have been received, and are now in course of publication.

#### STATE COLLIERIES.

The output from State Collieries during 1915 was 238,200 tons, of which 129,627 tons was produced from Point Elizabeth Colliery, and 108,573 tons from Liverpool Colliery. The total output from both mines exceeded that of the previous year by 38,012 tons.

The Point Elizabeth Colliery will probably be worked out within two years, and as it is from this mine that the best class of State household coal is produced, some difficulty may be experienced in supplying the State coal depots with household coal in the near future, as a large proportion of the Liverpool coal, amounting to 65 per cent. during 1915, was slack or small coal.

The State coal business during the year ended 31st March, 1916, resulted in a profit of £2,515, as compared with a loss of £14,152 13s. 11d. during the previous year.

#### GOVERNMENT WATER-RACES.

The Waimea-Kumara and Mount Ida Water-races, which render possible hydraulic mining in the Kumara district, Westland, and the Naseby district, Central Otago, have during 1915, supplied ninety-one miners with water for sluicing by which gold to the value of £19,562 was obtained. The cash received for water sold amounted to £3,106, and the expenditure on the upkeep of the races was £3,593. The capital expenditure upon these races exceeds £250,000, and as the cost of upkeep has now for some years exceeded the amount received for water sold, no interest on capital or depreciation has been provided.

During 1915 the average earnings per miner using Government water, after deducting the amount paid for the same, was £180, and from this must be subtracted all expenditure on plant and material, also rent and other incidental expenses.

#### SCHOOLS OF MINES.

The expenditure by the Department on schools of mines during the year ended 31st March, 1916, amounted to £3,652 6s. 7d.

The number of students attending one or more classes at the seven schools situated at mining centres was 284, but only twenty-two of these presented themselves at the annual Government examinations for examination on any of the exclusively mining subjects, the majority of the students being schoolboys and some girls who attend the schools in the evening to improve themselves in mathematics, chemistry, or electricity, subjects common to other industries, and usually taught at technical schools.

#### SUBSIDIZED PROSPECTING.

During the year ended 31st March, 1916, thirty-four approved prospecting parties were granted subsidies amounting to £5,151 8s. 4d., of which £2,736 17s. 11d. was expended during that period; in addition to which £1,111 granted during previous years was expended by twenty parties. Altogether thirty-six parties, employing eighty-six miners, were engaged upon prospecting operations during 1915; and although no discovery of much commercial value was made, ground has been proved in a few instances which may be profitably worked.

#### ROADS AND TRACKS.

The expenditure on roads and tracks by subsidies and direct grants during the financial year ended the 31st March, 1916, amounted to £24,432.