

Blackball Colliery.—Development of this colliery has been steadily pursued both to the rise and dip. No further development in the direction of dip in No. 2 has been done owing to difficulties with water. The eastern level, however, is still being driven; the coal here has proved to be somewhat softer than in the other areas. No. 9 dip is opening up in excellent hard coal, and has been driven about 12 chains. Unless prevented by water it is proposed to drive back at a lower level than No. 5 area and the western level of No. 2 dip, which had to be abandoned owing to water, for the purpose of winning the coal lying to the dip of these areas. During the year a new bathhouse has been built. A considerable amount of spontaneous heating has occurred, but in all cases the areas have been sealed off before actual fire broke out.

Two fatalities occurred during the year.

North Brunner.—The output from this colliery is being entirely won from pillar-extraction. This mine is gradually being worked out. No development-work is being undertaken at present. The only future prospect, I think, for this colliery is a small area lying to the south and dip of the present upper workings. A fair amount of fireclay has been won, and is being utilized for the making of bricks, the necessary equipment having been provided for this purpose, and is situated close to coal-storage bins at Stillwater.

Brunner Mine.—No development has been done during the year, the whole of the output having been won from pillar-extraction. There is no hope of further development in the area at present being worked, and it is the intention of the company to try and reach some of the coal left in former years in the old portion of the colliery. The coal mined is almost exclusively used for making coke and gas-production.

Reefton Mines.

There is very little of importance to report with reference to the mines in this district. For the most part only two or three men are employed in each mine, and the output is consumed locally, being used exclusively for household and steam-raising purposes. The output for the year, 11,499 tons, shows a decrease of 738 tons compared with last year. A good deal of soft coal is to be met with in these mines, besides which the areas operated on have proved the seams to be a good deal faulted.

A fatality happened at the Big River Mine during the year.

Westport District.

Coalbrookdale Colliery.—Warcatea section: Driving in this area has proved the existence of a large quantity of excellent coal. The seam in places is faulted, small displacements and splitting being observable.

Cascade dip: This area is extensively faulted. The coal, however, is hard throughout. Development in this area has practically ceased, and the output is being won from pillars.

No. 8 section, Cascade: No further progress is possible in this area owing to the coal outcropping, and all output is being won from pillars.

Iron Bridge Colliery.—A large area of coal awaits exploitation on the north side of the Waimangaroa, and the requirements for the extension of the necessary haulage arrangements are practically completed, but owing to labour being unobtainable development of this area is slow. Towards Mount William operations have steadily advanced, though minor faulting has been met with. The outlook for a steady output from this colliery is assured.

Westport Coal Company (Limited): Millerton Colliery.—This colliery has the largest daily output in the inspection district. Development has steadily proceeded in the various areas, and there yet remains large areas of workable coal. The South Mangatina heading has been driven through barren country for a distance exceeding 20 chains, and still has several chains to go before reaching the coal. Good coal of medium hardness is being won along the eastern boundary of the lease. This area (Mangatina) has been considerably denuded by streams. The coal from this colliery is mostly of a soft nature. In the lower section (dip) a good deal of faulting exists.

Westport-Stockton Colliery.—Old mine: New work has been confined to a small area situated on the left-hand side of the main endless-haulage road and going east. The seam here thins considerably, and the coal varies in quality. There still remains a considerable area to be proved. Development has proceeded southward along the western boundary of the D tunnel. The largest amount of output has been won from pillars from the several tunnels. There still remains a few years' work in these tunnels at the present output.

New mine (E section): Development in this area is proceeding in a south-westerly direction, and is opening up, generally, satisfactory hard coal of good quality, which is being met with especially in the No. 4 winning-headings, after crossing an upthrow fault cutting the country in an east-and-west direction. There yet remains a large tract of country to be worked in this portion of the colliery. A few pillars have been won skirting the eastern outcrop.

Co-operative Mine—No. 4 Old Cardiff, Seddonville.—The seam, which is of varying thickness, is being driven upon around the outskirts of the old workings, and shows an improvement towards Chasm Creek. Only two miners are employed winning coal.

Coal Creek Mine, Mokihini.—The coal is mostly very soft and dirty. Ventilation has been effected by connecting to the surface with small shafts. This mine is being worked by a small co-operative party.

Collingwood District.

Puponga Colliery.—Development has proceeded slowly in an easterly direction through the medium of a crosscut dip and level therefrom, the seam here being about 9 ft. thick, a section of which shows excellent hard coal 7 ft. thick, underlain by a 5 in. band of stone, then 10 in. of coal, and 9 in. of coal and soft dirt resting on the floor. Before development can be proceeded with to the dip it will be necessary to provide additional power on the surface for pumping.

North Cape Coal-mine.—Development has been confined to the dip workings, and all available coal above free drainage has been won. The seam where cut is approximately 5 ft. thick, but