

The lower or dip area of the colliery has been proceeding steadily in a southerly direction, and eventually will connect with the areas mentioned above, the approximate distance apart being 14 chains. In the Mangatina section the output has been won from small isolated coal areas. The main South Mangatina heading has been driven for 30 chains in barren ground and stopped, and a borehole recently drilled to the west of the heading, a distance of 10 to 12 chains, has cut the coal. The prospects of a long life for this colliery are good.

Westport-Stockton Colliery.—Development is mostly confined to the eastern portion of the mine (E section), where a large area of medium hard coal of good quality has been proved by driving, and there yet remains a large area known to contain workable coal not touched.

Old mine, B, C, and D tunnel sections: Development to the south of D tunnel has ceased owing to inferior and dirty coal, and the pillars, mostly soft coal, are being won homeward.

C tunnel is at present producing no output. A few pillars have been won from this area during the year. B tunnel: A few pillars are yet to be won on the boundary side (west) of the haulage-way. On the eastern side a section of good hard coal, the seam being about 5 ft. 6 in. thick, has been operated, and is still being won out. Should the present demand for steam-coal continue, there yet remains sufficient available coal in the old mine to last a considerable number of years at the present output.

Puponga Colliery, Collingwood District.—This colliery ceased work during July. At the time of stoppage it was impossible to successfully drive to the dip, the only direction apparently open to profitable operation, owing to the inadequate plant available at the colliery. The winning-places eastwards were fast becoming unworkable, owing to the intrusion of stone bands splitting the seam and replacing the coal.

North Cape Mine, Collingwood District.—The outlook for this property is not bright, and most probably its productive life will be short. In every direction driven the seam has consistently thinned to an unprofitable thickness. The main winning-dip, which has been driven approximately 10 chains, is standing in thin coal. The bottom west level after proceeding 12 chains has encountered a downthrow fault, and as the level has proceeded the seam has gradually thinned to about 18 in., an unprofitable thickness. The fault met with at the face of this level cuts the country east to west, and will be met with almost immediately driving is commenced again in the dip. Sinking on the head of the fault is being carried out, and unless the throw is small and the seam shows decided improvement in this direction development must cease.

Mokihinui Mine, Coal Creek.—No improvement in the quality of the coal has been met with during the year, although a considerable amount of driving has been accomplished. The country driven through has been found to be somewhat faulted, and the seam of coal dirty and irregular in thickness.

Co-operative Mine, Seddonville.—Driving has been continued on the outside of the old No. 4 workings with varying results. At times the seam has been found hard and clean, and at others soft and dirty.

Fatal Accidents.

Three persons lost their lives underground, and all at the **Blackball Colliery**.

On the 28th July a miner named William Graham, whilst engaged jigging a truck in No. 2 dip, No. 6 bank, was struck by a fall of coal from the roof, with fatal results.

On the 30th July John Tipler, deputy, and Thomas Abbott, shiftman, met their death by drowning, the result of being overtaken by a sudden rush of water which had accumulated behind a fall in the back heading of No. 17 section.

An official inquiry was held, pursuant to the provisions of the Coal-mines Amendment Act, 1914, in each of the foregoing occurrences. The Court found in each case that the charges against the officials of the mine could not, upon the evidence, be sustained.

Serious Non-fatal Accidents.

Puponga Colliery.—1st June: John Waddell, miner; received a severe injury to his right hand, caused by premature explosion of a detonator.

Westport-Stockton.—25th July: A. Kearns, trucker; received a severe fracture of the base of his skull through being struck with full tub of coal. Kearns was lowering a tub down a gentle gradient when it became derailed. He was in the act of spragging at the time, and the back portion of the tub as it lifted struck him, causing the injury.

On the 14th September, 1917, George Higham, miner: lacerated the muscles of his lower leg, caused by falling and striking buffer of truck on incline.

Point Elizabeth Colliery, No. 1 Section.—27th July: Peter Neilson, miner; fractured his skull, caused by a falling prop.

Denniston Colliery, Iron Bridge Section.—8th August: Edward Oldham, trucker; being struck by an empty tub while jigging, received injuries causing amputation of his leg.

Coalbrookdale Section.—22nd November: William Brown, miner; by a fall of coal at the face his thigh was broken.

Blackball Colliery.—3rd November: William Liddle, miner; by a fall of coal had both collar-bones broken.

Millerton Colliery.—12th December: S. McDonald, horse-driver: by being jammed between a full tub and limbers or shafts on which he was riding had a thigh bone broken.

Dangerous Occurrences requiring Notification in accordance with Regulation 81.

Denniston Iron Bridge Colliery.—On the 23rd May an explosion occurred in the Deep Creek area, the result of a blow-through shot, the explosive used being blasting-powder. This has been specially reported on by me.