

and although the present arrangement is only a temporary one and capable of dealing only with unscreened coal, it is pleasing to report that the output can be effectively dealt with.

Since work was resumed in the mines the work of dismantling the damaged bin was pushed on with all speed until the 9th March, when this work was stopped owing to the strike. To complete dismantling the bin and rebuilding the same will take at least eight months. The damage done through the landslip may be safely estimated at £7,000.

In September last a landslip occurred partially destroying the No. 3A mine viaduct and rendering that mine idle for three days. In October also a slip occurred, completely destroying three workmen's huts.

CHARMING CREEK COALFIELD.

As outlined in my previous report, before anything could be definitely done regarding this coalfield it was necessary to have surveys made in order to arrive at an estimate of the cost of the undertaking. During the year two routes were surveyed—one from near Nikau Station to the lowest point of the Charming Creek Coalfield, and the other from Seddonville to the same point.

After the completion of the surveys, and in company with Mr. Learmont, the surveyor, the routes were inspected by Messrs. Blow, Reed, Newton, and myself, and a conference held later at the Inspector of Mines office, Westport, where the cost of developing this coalfield by the two routes was thoroughly discussed. The result of the conference was not made known to the public, but it would not be out of place to state that the development of this coalfield by either route would be a costly undertaking.

BUILDING, LIGHTING, AND TRACK-CONSTRUCTION, ETC.

During the year a track was constructed from the Gorge Tunnel to Upper Rewanui, a distance of 68 chains, which now enables most of the residents to get to and from the railway-station without travelling along the haulage road.

Electric lights were installed in most of the cottages and huts at Upper Rewanui, for which the Department charges at the rate of 6d. per light per week. Several large electric lamps were also erected in various parts of Upper Rewanui Township.

Twenty-five workmen's huts were built during the year, also a large stable and feed-house, and a clipping-shed at the entrance to one of the mines. The building of a school for the Education Department was also commenced, but this work had to be suspended owing to the landslip near the storage-bins blocking the road for taking timber to the building. Arrangements are being made to have this building completed as early as possible.

GENERAL.

Reviewing the work for the year it will be seen that strikes were responsible for the loss of no less than thirty-four days' work at the Point Elizabeth Colliery, and thirty-two at the Liverpool Colliery. This, together with a loss of twenty-three days due to the destruction of the bins at Rewanui, will account for the decreased output from each colliery as compared with the previous year.

Although no serious accidents occurred in connection with the ordinary working of the mine, it is regrettable to report that two men lost their lives on the Greymouth-Runanga Road whilst in the execution of their duty bringing out the fortnight's wages from the bank to the mine.

In conclusion, I have pleasure in reporting that the officers in the various branches have directed their best efforts in the interests of the industry, and I am also indebted to the Inspecting Engineer, who in the course of his duties rendered good service.

I have, &c.,

I. A. JAMES, Manager.