

for the different depots owing to urgent Government requirements absorbing the entire output of screened coal, thereby leaving available only a limited supply of unscreened coal each week for disposal through the depots for household and trade purposes. The quantity shipped was quite inadequate in view of the demands made on the depots by householders, and frequent stoppages owing to lack of supplies took place with consequent disorganization and loss of business. In this connection it must not be overlooked that while the depots have shown a loss owing to the impossibility of maintaining regular supplies, the collieries have benefited by the increased f.o.b. rates fixed for screened coal (a proportion of which was previously supplied to depots), and that although a loss has been made in distribution through the depots the public who have been drawing supplies therefrom have substantially benefited by the lower prices charged by the State Coal Department.

During the year regular visits of inspection were paid to the depots for the purpose of keeping in close touch with operations, and for promoting closer co-operation between Head Office and branches.

OUTPUT.

The gross output of the mines for the year was 246,273 tons, as compared with 265,782 tons for last year, a decrease of 19,509 tons. A comparative statement for the two years is shown below :—

Mine.	Output in Tons, 1916-17.		Output in Tons, 1917-18.	
	Gross.	Net.	Gross.	Net.
Point Elizabeth ..	132,769	125,030	118,077	111,552
Liverpool ..	133,013	127,780	128,196	124,782
Totals ..	265,782	252,810	246,273	236,334

(NOTE.—The difference between the gross and net outputs is the allowance made for mine-consumption and waste.)

Point Elizabeth Colliery produced 111,552 tons of marketable coal, a decrease of 13,478 tons on the production last year. After allowing for stocks on hand and afloat at the beginning and end of the year the disposal was as under :—

Supplied to	Screened.	Unscreened.	Steam.	Small.	Totals.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Depots	18,730	16,164	...	12,087	46,981
Railways	23,440	746	...	5	24,191
Shipping companies	49	3,999	13,217	12,870	30,135
Other Government Departments	250	1,381	1,631
Other consumers	4,294	3,886	18	2,069	10,267
Totals	46,763	26,176	13,235	27,031	113,205

Liverpool Colliery produced 124,782 tons of marketable coal, a decrease of 2,998 tons on the previous year's production. The disposal, allowing for stock in hand at beginning of year, was as follows :—

Supplied to	Screened.	Unscreened.	Steam.	Small.	Totals.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Depots	15,499	2,120	...	7,857	25,476
Railways	17,178	6,704	...	69	23,951
Shipping companies	21	4,172	6,466	9,188	19,847
Gas companies	9	21,689	...	32,209	53,907
Other Government Departments	34	231	265
Other consumers	943	2,120	...	126	3,189
Totals	33,684	37,036	6,466	49,449	126,635

The total sales for the year amounted to 239,840 tons, value £267,927, as compared with 256,558 tons, value £248,817, for last year, a decrease in quantity of 16,718 tons, and an increase in value of £19,110.