

1920.
NEW ZEALAND.

COAL-CONTROL DEPARTMENT.

REPORT BY MINISTER IN CHARGE.

Laid before both Houses of the General Assembly by Leave.

REPORT.

It will be remembered that in my report for the year 1919 incorporated in that for the Munitions and Supplies Department—the whole circumstances leading up to the establishment of control over the distribution of coal throughout the Dominion were fully outlined, and the activities of the Department up to the middle of that year exhaustively reviewed. In addition, the functions of the Coal Trade Committees set up in the four centres were defined. It is therefore unnecessary for me to again draw attention to those aspects.

During last year it is regrettable to record that the production of coal in the Dominion mines has shown a falling-off of 186,402 tons when compared with the previous year; the total production for last year falling short of 1914 by 427,745 tons.

The following table, showing outputs and importations for the years 1914 to 1919 inclusive, illustrates the seriousness of the decline which has taken place over that period :—

Year.				New Zealand Outputs.	Importations.	Total.
				Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
1914	..	..	..	2,275,593	518,070	2,793,663
1915	..	..	..	2,208,624	353,471	2,562,095
1916	..	..	..	2,257,135	293,956	2,551,091
1917	..	..	..	2,068,419	291,597	2,360,016
1918	..	..	..	2,034,250	255,332	2,289,582
1919	..	..	..	1,847,848	455,494	2,303,342

It will be observed that the total quantity of coal available for distribution last year was 13,760 tons more than for the preceding year, but this increase is solely due to increased importations, which exceeded those for 1918 by 200,162 tons. On the other hand, it has to be pointed out that the total quantity of coal available (produced and imported) in 1919 was 490,321 tons less than for the year 1914.

If the combined outputs and importations for each year for the past six years had been maintained on the 1914 basis the Dominion would have had a total of 16,761,978 tons instead of 14,859,789 tons actually produced and imported—a net loss on the six-yearly period of 1,902,189 tons.

To show the fluctuations in the production of coal in the three divisions under which the Dominion's output of coal is classified (and also importations), the following table for the years 1914 to 1919 inclusive will prove of interest :—

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT SHOWING OUTPUTS OF NEW ZEALAND MINES AND IMPORTATIONS FROM 1914 TO 1919 INCLUSIVE.

Year.				Bituminous and Semi-bituminous.	Brown.	Lignite.	Totals for New Zealand Mines.	Importations.	Grand Totals.
				(1) Tons.	(2) Tons.	(3) Tons.	(4) Tons.	(5) Tons.	(6) Tons.
1914	..	..	..	1,494,313	691,367	89,913	2,275,593	518,070	2,793,663
1915	..	..	..	1,404,400	725,001	79,223	2,208,624	353,471	2,562,095
1916	..	..	..	1,422,074	653,898	181,163	2,257,135	293,956	2,551,091
1917	..	..	..	1,247,989	629,174	191,256	2,068,419	291,597	2,360,016
1918	..	..	..	1,122,308	705,773	206,169	2,034,250	255,332	2,289,582
1919	..	..	..	961,107	684,331	202,410	1,847,848	455,494	2,303,342
Total for six years				7,652,191	4,089,544	950,134	12,691,869	2,167,920	14,859,789