

Since 1916 the annual output of coal has declined from 2,257,135 tons to 1,843,705 tons during 1920, but there is evidence that such decline will be arrested during the current year.

During 1920 no new colliery of importance attained the output stage. The James and MacDonald proposed State collieries, situated respectively near Greymouth and Huntly, are being developed, and surface buildings, tramways, and equipment are being installed.

Production of coal from the Point Elizabeth State Colliery ceased, owing to its exhaustion, with a total output of 2,401,610 tons. An area of about 250 acres was worked on the bord-and-pillar system, the proportion of extraction being about 77 per cent., which probably is the highest yet attained in the Dominion, and compares favourably with the proportion of extraction at the Brunner Colliery, the only other considerable colliery worked out on the Grey coalfield; in that case the proportion was 32·6 per cent. over an area of 450 acres.

The production from and the number of persons employed at the collieries of the Dominion are shown in the following table :—

Name of Colliery.				Locality.	Class of Coal.	Output for 1920.	Total Output to 31st December, 1920.	Total Number of Persons ordinarily employed.
<i>Northern District.</i>						Tons.	Tons.	
Hikurangi	...	...	...	Hikurangi...	Semi-bituminous	68,098	1,311,226	109
Taupiri Extended	...	...	...	Huntly	Brown	139,386	2,697,143	331
Rotowaro	...	...	...	Rotowaro	"	81,188	188,452	137
Pukemiro	...	...	...	Pukemiro	"	90,140	475,825	187
Waipa	...	...	...	Glen Massey	"	59,696	502,648	106
<i>West Coast District.</i>								
Westport (2 collieries)				Millerton	Bituminous	212,212	5,922,363	330
				Denniston	"	127,091	8,056,075	302
Westport-Stockton				Mangatini	"	131,265	1,618,002	248
State (2 collieries) {				Point Elizabeth	Semi-bituminous	4,902	2,401,610	43
Liverpool				Dunollie	Bituminous	142,519	849,713	341
Blackball				Rewanui	Bituminous	101,429	2,905,084	288
				Blackball	"			
<i>Southern District.</i>								
Kaitangata and Castle Hill (3 collieries)				Kaitangata	Brown	96,091	3,832,121	306
Taratu				Near Kaitangata	Lignite	46,870	441,274	99
Nightcaps				Nightcaps	Brown	37,669	1,393,900	90
130 other New Zealand collieries				All coalfields	Various	505,149	19,288,957	1,161
Totals				...	...	1,843,705	51,884,393	4,078

SECTION II.—PERSONS EMPLOYED.

Inspection District.						Average Number of Persons employed during 1920.		
						Above Ground.	Below Ground.	Total.
Northern	...	...	...	...	...	273	717	990
West Coast	...	...	...	...	...	519	1,375	1,894
Southern	...	...	...	...	...	360	834	1,194
Totals, 1920						1,152	2,926	4,078
Totals, 1919						1,095	2,849	3,944

The increase in the number of persons employed, although small, is satisfactory, and there is evidence that it will continue. There has, however, been a decrease of output per person employed