

Another unusual accident occurred on the 8th November in the Waro Colliery, Hikurangi, when a miner, Harry Parr, lost his life, due to a fault in the signalling system installed in the mine. The bells in use were operated through a relay which was connected to a signalling-circuit energized to 15 volts by Leclanché cells, and a 400-volt bell-ringing circuit connected to the 400-volt main supply. The deceased was electrocuted whilst engaged handling the signalling-wire, and a subsequent examination of the relay proved that the insulation between the circuits had broken down. The relays attached to the remaining bells were replaced by a maximum voltage of 20 throughout the circuits.

SERIOUS NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS.

William Ballard, Hikurangi Colliery, was off work from the 26th February to the 23rd May, due to receiving a wound to his right eye caused by sparking coal.

On the 24th June, Thomas Holland, engaged as a winch-driver in Taupiri East Coal-mine, sustained an amputation of one of his fingers, due to his hand being caught between the rope and drum.

On the 15th July, Gavin Scurr, magazine-storekeeper, Rotowaro Colliery, sustained the loss of his right eye, due to an accident whilst engaged in winding detonators on a spool. The leads of the detonators touched an electrically charged radiator that was installed in the storeroom.

On the 4th August, George Martin, aged sixteen years, employed by Pukemiro Collieries, Ltd., caught his leg between skips and a guard rail, resulting in injured left leg, knee, and hip-bone.

DAINGEROUS OCCURRENCES (REGULATION 82 OF THE COAL-MINES ACT, 1925).

On the 14th March, 1932, a heating was discovered in the north section of the Pukemiro Colliery. Stoppings were erected close up to the goaf, and pillar falls occurring at frequent intervals were the means of checking the heating.

On the 31st March and the 20th April, 1932, the mine-workings of the Waro Colliery were flooded, due to inrush of water from the surface, and to the inadequacy of the installed pumps to cope with abnormal flows of water.

On the 16th August, 1932, "fire-stink" was discovered in the east side dip of Rotowaro No. 1 Mine. The section was sealed off.

On the 31st August, 1932, a fire originating in the waste ground near the eastern outcrop of Graham's Colliery caused the mine to be sealed off for three months. Fourteen stoppings were subsequently erected, and the mine recovered.

On the 1st September an outbreak of fire in the rise workings of the shaft-level section, Hikurangi Mine, resulted in the area being sealed off at the entrance to the section.

On the 23rd November, 1932, a serious outbreak of fire occurred in the Hikurangi Shaft Colliery, with the result that the western section of the mine was sealed down at the end of the year.

HUNTLY SCHOOL OF MINES.

The attendances at the various classes held at Pukemiro, Renown, and Huntly were not maintained as during previous years, due no doubt to the depressed condition of the coal trade, and to the fact that a number of students have been discouraged by loss of employment. Decreased donations, students' fees, and subsidies have forced the Council to economize in salaries and travelling-expenses, but in order that the ground covered by previous instruction should be sustained for the benefit of the improving students, it has been decided to resume continuation classes at Glen Afton and Glen Massey.

WEST COAST INSPECTION DISTRICT (C. J. STRONGMAN, Inspector of Mines).

The output from the West Coast Inspection District for 1932 was 844,010 tons, as compared with 890,494 tons for 1931. The Buller and Reefton districts show decreases of 48,967 and 6,357 tons respectively, while the Greymouth and Nelson districts show increases of 4,411 tons and 4,429 tons respectively. The increase in the Grey district may be attributed to the more steady working of the Blackball Mines, which show decided increases over last year's figures. The larger output from the Seymour and Mount Burnett Mines is mainly the cause of the increase in the Nelson district. The output from the majority of the mines in the West Coast Inspection District has been seriously curtailed by the limited market available. The partial time worked has been a serious factor in the extraction of pillars in the older mines, more particularly those working thick seams. The question of pillar extraction in these mines is becoming one of paramount importance. The straight-line system of extraction still continues to give good results.

GREY DISTRICT.

Liverpool State Collieries.—No. 1 Mine: All the pillars having been extracted, coal-winning operations at this mine were abandoned during March, 1932.

No. 2 Mine: Development work at this mine was confined to the extending of the Kimbell east level section, Anderson dip section, and the workings to the rise in the Morgan seam. The Kimbell east level having been driven a distance of 52 chains from the main haulage-road, was stopped in proximity to the Davy Creek fault. At this point the coal became thin and intersected with dirt bands. Nearing the fault the contour of the coal-seam changed until the main level was approximately following the same direction as the main incline. In the Anderson section the seam had been variable in gradient and thickness. The quality of the coal, which is excellent, remained uniform throughout. The winning-places to the rise in the Morgan seam are now in proximity to the barrier that is being left between the Nos. 1 and 2 Mines. Development work in this section is nearing completion. During the year pillar-extraction was commenced in the Morgan and Kimbell seams. Fairly good results were obtained in winning the maximum percentage of coal. The total output from commencement of operations up to the 31st December, 1932, is 2,383,633 tons.

James State Colliery.—Operations at this mine were a continuation of those of the previous year—the extension of the development in the crosscut area and the extraction of pillars in the west section. In the crosscut area two sections have been worked, known as the dip and south level. In the former the seam has been uniform in gradient and thickness. The amount of coal to be won in this section is limited by the proximity of an upthrow fault which has a displacement of approximately 190 ft. Development in the south-level section has been retarded by intrusions of stone bands and rolls, also quantities of iron pyrites. The hard nature of the roof over the coal enables a complete extraction of all pillars to be made. Prospecting, accompanied by boring, has been continuously carried on throughout the year on a portion of the reserve between the Nine Mile and Ten Mile Creeks. Five diamond-drill holes were put down with satisfactory results, the total depth drilled being 2,829 ft. The work of prospecting has been hampered by the precipitous nature of the country, necessitating the erection of aerial ropeways for the transport of the boring-plant. The total output from this mine up to the 31st December, 1932, is 338,997 tons.

Blackball Coal-mines Proprietary, Ltd.—Development work in the Blackball Mine consisted mainly of cleaning up the old main level, and good progress was made to No. 18 bank. No effort was made to work any of the abandoned portions along the road other than to drive a new return airway in the barrier pillar on the lower side. The work of cleaning up presented no great difficulty, as the debris from the upper workings had been carried to the level, packing it tight and supporting the roof. The endless-rope haulage has been extended as far as No. 17 bank. Pillar-extraction was carried on below No. 1 level from No. 3 dip. On the surface,