of such a line is very obvious, as the heavy freights would be downhill in all directions, whether to Canterbury, Cook Strait, or the West Coast."

The extent of the coal-beds in the Upper Buller field has not, of course, been ascertained; but several outcrops of high-class bituminous coal have been discovered. There is a seam at Glenroy 2ft. thick, three seams near Murchison 3ft., 4ft., and 6ft. thick respectively, and one or two near Lake Rotoroa, thickness unknown. The analysis of the coal from the three first-mentioned of these seams has shown it to be quite equal to that from the Greymouth and Westport mines. The distance along the proposed railways from the middle of the Upper Buller coalfield to important centres is as follows: Westport 55, Nelson 90, Blenheim 104, and Picton 122 miles.

Karamea Watershed.—Beyond the fact that it yields good bituminous coal, and that the country is very inaccessible, there is very little known about the patch of coal-formation on the watershed between the Mokihinui, Karamea, and Wangapeka Rivers.

Kanieri.—The Kanieri coalfield is the smallest in the list, but the coal is bituminous and of excellent quality. The great drawback is that the seam is quite vertical, which makes it difficult to work. Experts are, however, of opinion that it will yet be found lying flat. The field is easy of access, and the seam runs from 2ft. to 8ft. thick.

Paparoa Range.—The coal-formation between the Paparoa Range and the sea is the largest in area of any on the West Coast; but none of the coal has been worked, and the country is not in the direct line of settlement. As a coalfield, therefore, it has not received much attention, and our information regarding it is somewhat meagre. Practically, all that we know is that coal of various qualities is dispersed at different levels all over a very wide area.

Upper Motueka.—The last coalfield in the list is the large one in the Motueka watershed, between Mount Owen and the Baton River. It is situated high up among the ranges, in a somewhat inaccessible situation, and far out of the main line of communication. Beyond the fact that there is a wide extent of country producing good bituminous coal, our information on the subject is not very complete. When the time comes for opening out the field it will be best done by a railway running up the Motueka Valley.

Prospects of Coal Industries.—It is quite unnecessary to consider the question of the permanency of the West Coast coalfields; it is admitted on all sides. What we want to consider is how best to dispose of our enormous supplies. The following table shows the demand and supply of coal for the whole of New Zealand during the past seven years:—

	Demand.			Supply.	
	Consumption within the Colony.	Exported.	Total Demand.	Raised in the Colony.	Imported.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
1879	382,099	7,195	389,294	231,218	158,076
1880	416,200	7,021	423,221	299,923	123,298
1881	460,598	6,626	467,224	337,262	129,962
1882	503,609	4,245	507,854	378,272	129,582
1883	538,132	7,172	545,304	421,764	123,540
1884	622,921	6,354	629,275	480,831	148,444
1885	638,894	2,371	641,265	511,063	130,202

As shown by the table, the coal-mines of New Zealand depend almost entirely on the home consumption, which has hitherto been more than sufficient to absorb the supply. It is evident, however, that the home market is not sufficient to cause anything like a proper development of the industry, no matter how rapidly the colony may progress, or how much local manufactures are extended. Furthermore, the nature of our trade with New South Wales enables the imported coal to compete with the native product in all the larger centres. The New Zealand steamers have less cargo offering from Sydney than New Zealand; consequently they can carry coal at very low freight.

All these circumstances point to the necessity for finding a market for the New Zealand coal outside the colony. I believe that the only real difficulty in the way is the West Coast harbours, and that a large export trade will spring up so soon as vessels of large draught can come in. For gas purposes the Greymouth coal is worth about 2s. 6d. per ton more than Newcastle; and this opens the door to all the colonies that have no coal of their own. With improved means of transport, I see no reason why New Zealand coal should not compete all round, and for all purposes, with the coal from New South Wales. The amount of coal imported into Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania during 1884 was over 600,000 tons; and these are not the only markets open to the New Zeal and coal if it can only be supplied cheap enough. Including the colonies just mentioned, it is estimated that the demand for coal in the southern seas and other places commanded by New Zealand is over 4,000,000 tons per annum, of which Newcastle only supplies about 1,700,000, the remainder being obtained from England. This shows that the possibilities of the coal industries on the West Coast are very great.

Other Minerals.

As already stated, a great variety of minerals have been found in greater or less quantities all the way down the West Coast, from Cook Strait to Otago. Nelson possesses a wonderful assortment. So also does Reefton and the Paringa district. The latter is, however, outside the area immediately affected by the railway.