

## PETROLEUM OIL

There has been no resumption of the search for petroleum in New Zealand since prospecting ceased early in 1944, and all of the petroleum-prospecting licences taken out have now either lapsed or been abandoned.

There is now only one licence under the Petroleum Act current—namely, the petroleum mining licence that has been held by Moturoa Oil Fields, Ltd. From this company's wells at Moturoa 81,625 gallons of crude petroleum oil was obtained during 1946, bringing the Dominion's total production of crude petroleum oil at 31st December, 1946, to 3,584,407 gallons. Production from the Moturoa field has been declining of recent years, and the output for 1946 shows a reduction of some 10,000 gallons from the figure for 1945. The assets both of Moturoa Oil Fields, Ltd., and of New Zealand Oil Refineries, Ltd., which had refined the crude oil from the Moturoa wells, have recently been transferred, and it is understood that the new owner intends both to recondition the old wells to augment the flow of petroleum and to drill one or more additional wells, and thus endeavour to increase production so that refining operations can be maintained at an economic scale.

## COAL-MINING

The total coal production of the Dominion for the year 1946 amounted to 2,793,870 tons which is 39,706 tons less than production in 1945 which amounted to 2,833,576.

The annual production of coal since 1930 has been as follows:—

Year.	Tons.	Year.	Tons.
1930 .. ..	2,542,092	1939 .. ..	2,342,639
1931 .. ..	2,157,756	1940 .. ..	2,516,099
1932 .. ..	1,842,022	1941 .. ..	2,639,507
1933 .. ..	1,821,258	1942 .. ..	2,680,041
1934 .. ..	2,060,315	1943 .. ..	2,787,868
1935 .. ..	2,115,184	1944 .. ..	2,805,970
1936 .. ..	2,140,217	1945 .. ..	2,833,576
1937 .. ..	2,277,799	1946 .. ..	2,793,870
1938 .. ..	2,222,088		

Although production for 1946 shows a slight decrease from the output recorded in 1944 and 1945, it still shows the substantial increase of 451,231 tons over the output attained in 1939, the first year of the war.

During 1946, 165 mines in all were in operation, and of these, 58 mines operated wholly or principally on freehold land and the remaining 107 wholly or predominantly on Crown land.

Output from freehold land was 1,062,361 tons (38 per cent.) and output from Crown land 1,731,509 tons (62 per cent.).

In 1946, 27,185 tons of coal were imported as against no importations in 1945 and 1944, and 37,454 tons imported in 1943. Of the coal imported during 1946 all was obtained from Wyoming, in the United States of America, with the exception of one shipment of some 3,500 tons obtained from Vancouver Island, Canada.

Imports from America have been continued during the current year, and till the end of May an additional 36,500 tons have been received, with two additional shipments in transit and one in process of loading. As negotiations are proceeding for further shipments later in the year import figures for the year 1947 should show a substantial increase and approach the pre-war import figure of approximately 100,000 tons per year.

The coal imported is bituminous in type, and, while inferior to that previously obtained from New South Wales, it has proved suitable for use on the railways, and has accordingly been of assistance in eking out our bituminous-coal supplies and allowing diversion to other uses.