

The following table shows the number of miners in each inspection district, and the branch of mining in which they are engaged :—

Classification.	Inspection District.			
	Northern.	West Coast.	Southern.	Total.
Gold and silver .. .. .	2,943	2,304	2,118	7,365
Coal .. .. .	732	2,610	948	4,290
Iron .. .. .	..	11	..	11
Scheelite .. .. .	..	..	24	24
Totals .. .. .	<b>3,675</b>	<b>4,925</b>	<b>3,090</b>	<b>11,690</b>

### MINING ACCIDENTS.

The number of fatalities recorded in connection with mining operations during 1911 is nineteen, and the number of men reported as seriously injured thirty-nine. The fatalities which occurred in and about the coal-mines total fourteen, or two less than during the previous year, when the number of serious accidents was twenty, as against sixteen in 1910. At metalliferous mines the fatalities during the year numbered five, compared with fifteen during 1910, a most satisfactory decrease. The number of serious non-fatal accidents at coal-mines was nineteen, as against seventeen during 1910. The fatalities per thousand persons employed in metal-mines were 0·67, and in coal-mines 3·26, or an average of 1·62 per thousand for metalliferous and coal mines combined.

### STATE COLLIERIES.

The output from the State collieries during 1911 amounted to 248,937 tons, as against 275,602 during the previous year, being a decline of 26,665 tons. This decrease is due to the approaching exhaustion of the two State collieries at Seddonville and Point Elizabeth, which were not new mines when acquired by the Government several years ago. Provision, however, has been made to meet the requirements of the market by the laying-down of a new colliery—namely, the Point Elizabeth No. 2 Mine—which is situated at Seven-mile Creek, beyond Runanga. To this colliery a branch railway and haulage inclines have been constructed, and by the end of the current year the mine should have reached the output stage.

I regret to state that the profit on the working of the State coal-mines during the financial year ended 31st March, 1912, was less than during the previous year. This is principally owing to higher cost of production, but partly to diminished output.

The briquette-manufactory at Westport, which for about three years was worked in conjunction with the Seddonville Colliery, was closed during 1911 owing to the high cost of manufacture. The making of briquettes at the Westport State manufactory was one of the subjects inquired into by the Royal Commission on Mines, the report being to the effect that the cost of manufacturing with a pitch bond precluded competition in the market with coal as a fuel, and that it did not appear that any material saving could be effected in the manufacture of the briquettes.

### SCHOOLS OF MINES.

The schools of mines, which have now been established twenty-seven years, continue to contribute to the education of mining and metallurgical students at the principal mining centres throughout the Dominion. The number of important positions occupied by students from these schools in many of the great mining districts of the world bears testimony to the efficiency of the system, and the practical teaching at these schools has no doubt contributed to the low working-cost and the high proportion of the dividends paid by the most important of our mining companies.

At the last annual examinations seventy-six students presented themselves for examination.