

at prospecting or development work. One party produced  $1\frac{3}{4}$  tons of asbestos, valued at £105, from its claim in Takaka County.

#### PETROLEUM.

No development of commercial value occurred at any of the five oil-boring operations in the Dominion. The Blenheim bore at Moturoa attained a depth of 5,726 ft., being the deepest borehole in Australasia. The bore at Chertsey, Canterbury, attained a depth of 2,178 ft. Gas-emanations were given off at both bores.

#### PHOSPHATE ROCK.

The production of phosphate rock at Clarendon and Milburn, Otago, amounted to 5,341 tons, valued at £5,341, as compared with 4,000 tons, valued at £4,000, during the previous year.

#### COAL-MINING.

The output of coal during 1920 amounted to 1,843,705 tons, as compared with 1,847,848 tons during 1919, being a decrease of 4,143 tons.

The following is a comparative statement of the coal and lignite raised during the years 1918, 1919, and 1920:—

Inspection District.	Output for 1919.	Output for 1920.	Increase or Decrease, 1920.	Output for 1918.	Increase or Decrease between Years 1919 and 1918.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Northern (North Island) ..	511,451	483,492	27,959*	549,778	38,327*
West Coast (of South Island)	845,826	821,507	24,319*	997,089	151,263*
Southern (Canterbury, Otago, and Southland)	490,571	538,706	48,135†	487,383	3,188†
Totals .. ..	1,847,848	1,843,705	4,143*	2,034,250	186,402*

\* Decrease.

† Increase.

Notwithstanding an increase of 134 in the number of persons employed in or about coal-mines, the output declined 4,143 tons. The average production per person employed below ground declined from 648 tons during 1919 to 630 tons during 1920. It is gratifying to find that the Inangahua, Otago, and Southland coalfields produced record outputs.

During the year no new collieries attained the output stage. The James State Colliery, near Runanga, and the State colliery near Waikokowai are being developed, and surface buildings, tramways, and equipment are being installed. Production of coal from the oldest and most profitable State colliery—viz., Point Elizabeth—ceased, owing to exhaustion as a large colliery, after a total output of 2,401,610 tons, an area of about 250 acres being worked out.

The comparative tonnage of the various classes of coal raised for the years 1919 and 1920 is summarized as follows:—

Class.	Output for 1920.	Output for 1919.	Increase or Decrease for 1920.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Bituminous and semi-bituminous ..	923,575	961,107	<i>Decrease</i> 37,532
Brown coal .. .. .	715,709	684,331	<i>Increase</i> 31,378
Lignite .. .. .	204,421	202,410	<i>Increase</i> 2,011
Totals .. .. .	1,843,705	1,847,848	<i>Decrease</i> 4,143

The increase in brown-coal and lignite output is due to the greater production from Otago and Southland, which more than compensates for the Waikato coal-field decline.